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THE ANGUS LECTURESHIP

II

THE CHRISTIAN CREED

AND THE

CREEDS OF CHRISTENDOM

SEVEN LECTURES DELIVERED IN 1898
AT REGENT'S PARK COLLEGE
LONDON

BY

SAMUEL G. GREEN, B.A., D.D.

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PRELIMINARY NOTE

THE ANGUS LECTURESHIP has its origin in a Fund raised as a Testimonial to the Rev. Joseph Angus, M.A., D.D., as an expression of the sense entertained by the subscribers of his character and services as President of the Baptist Theological College formerly situated at Stepney and now at Regent's Park, London. Dr. Angus having intimated his desire that the Fund should be devoted to the establishment of a permanent Lectureship in connection with the College, a Trust has been constituted for the purpose; 'its income to be administered and applied by the College Committee for the establishment and maintenance of a Lectureship, to be called "The Angus Lectureship," in connection with the said College, for the delivery of periodic Lectures on great questions connected with Systematic, Practical, or Pastoral

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Theology, or the Evidences and Study of the Bible, or Christian Missions, or Church History, or kindred subjects.'

It is further provided that the College Committee, in conjunction with the Trustees, shall once in two years, or oftener (should exceptional circumstances render it desirable), 'appoint and engage a Lecturer, who shall ordinarily be a member of the Baptist denomination, but who may occasionally be a member of any other body of Evangelical Christians, to deliver a course of not more than eight Lectures, on some subject of the nature hereinbefore mentioned.'

In accordance with these provisions, the Rev. Dr. Angus delivered, at Regent's Park College, in the year 1896, a Course of Six Lectures on RE-GENERATION, afterwards published.

The Second Course, delivered in 1898, is contained in the following volume.

NOTE.—The sentences above marked as quotations are from the Deed of Trust, executed March 1896.

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*** For detailed information on the several Creeds, the student is referred to the encyclopædic volumes of the late Dr. Philip Schaff, 1877 :—1. *A History of the Creeds of Christendom;* 2. *The Creeds of the Greek and Latin Churches;* 3. *The Creeds of the Evangelical Protestant Churches.* Many of the original documents, as well as translations, are given by Dr. Schaff; and much information, especially with respect to the Confessions of the Greek Church in vol. ii., and to those of the Reformation period in vol. iii., both formerly almost inaccessible to the English reader, is now placed within easy reach.

The article 'Creed' in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, by Dr. C. A. Swainson, contains not only a succinct and lucid account of the ancient Western Creeds, but a most useful series of references to original authorities. The same writer's elaborate work (*The Nicene and Apostles' Creeds; their Literary History; together with an Account of the Growth and Reception of the Sermon on the Faith commonly called 'The Creed of St. Athanasius.'* Murray, 1875), and, on the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the *Harmonia Symbolica* of Dr. Heurtley, are of great value.

Other important works are specified in the Notes to the Lectures, and in the Appendix.

LECTURE I

INTRODUCTORY: FAITH AND DOGMA

I CANNOT enter upon my allotted task without a grateful reference to our venerable friend, of whose eminent services to the Church, as well of whose high disinterestedness, this Lectureship is the lasting memorial. Dr. Angus has already discussed, in the First Course of Lectures, a great doctrine of our common faith.[1] I have ventured to choose a subject connected with Faith itself, in the varied modes of its expression from age to age,—technically the Science of Christian Symbolics. Let me premise one thing. I am convinced that all here will welcome, and indeed expect from every Lecturer, the unfettered expression of individual

[1] *On Regeneration:* the Angus Lectureship, First Series, 1896, by the Rev. Joseph Angus, M.A., D.D., President Emeritus of Regent's Park College.

opinion. I could not have come before you as a mere advocate of prescribed formulas or foregone conclusions: whatever our denominational position may be, I trust that we are, above all, a company of serious religious inquirers; knowing that the Spirit of God is honoured best by the free as well as reverent investigation of Divine Truth.

Creed is simply *Credo*, 'I believe,' the first word of the so-called Apostolic formula. It is the intellectual expression of Christian Faith. Yet, at the very outset of our discussion, it is needful to bear in mind that the Faith which Christianity claims is something far larger and deeper than aught belonging to the Understanding or Reason. Faith in its true and highest sense is Trust—a loving, practical trust in God as revealed in Christ, for pardon and redemption from sin, with all gifts of light and help and grace. It is, in the words of Calvin, 'of the heart more than of the head, and rather of the affections than the understanding.'

There is perhaps no subject in the whole range of theological science on which the inadequacy of human language is more to be deplored, and where it is more needful to press for exactness of defini-

tion.[1] For the same words, *Faith* and its cognate verb *to believe*, πίστις, πιστεύω, may be variously used to denote almost any degree of assent, from the bare acceptance of a fact up to the full reliance of the soul upon God. In the Epistle of James, the brother of the Lord, Faith occurs in its simplest meaning; and the futility of mere belief in securing acceptance with God is vigorously shown. The Apostle Paul, on the other hand, lays hold of the larger, deeper significance of Faith, and speaks of trust in God through Jesus Christ as the means by which the soul is made right with Him; while, again, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, more intent upon the practical issue of such trust than on any complete definition, presents it as the source of obedience, endurance, and heroism. In these several representations there is a deep interior harmony; and no view of Christian Faith can be adequate which does not include them all.

But we have now to do with Faith on its intellectual side. For undoubtedly there is implied in Christian Trust a definite act of the under-

[1] See Note I. Appendix: *The Influence of Words on our Conceptions of Faith.*

standing. It is trust in a Person, but this trust will necessarily be conditioned by our thoughts, conceptions, beliefs concerning Him. 'He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him.'[1] Here we have the beginnings of Theology.

The system or summary of Christian beliefs is sometimes termed, collectively, 'the Faith.' Of this usage there is a definite example in the Epistle of Jude: 'Exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered unto the saints': manifestly here a body of doctrine; so, perhaps, in a following verse: 'Building up yourselves on your most holy faith.'[2] There is, however, no other passage in the New Testament where the phrase can be certainly shown to have this meaning;[3] although some expositors suppose it implied in parts of the First Epistle to Timothy, as ch. iii. 9: 'Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience'; iv. 6: 'Nourished in the words of the faith'; as well as in passages which speak of departure from this

[1] Heb. xi. 6. [2] Jude 3, 20.

[3] Pfleiderer, *Paulinismus*, Eng. tr. ii. p. 200. But see Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* 107, note A (Eng. tr. ii. 126).

standard; i. 19: 'Some . . . made shipwreck concerning the faith'; iv. 1: 'In later times some shall fall away from the faith'; v. 8: 'He hath denied the faith'; vi. 10: 'Some . . . have been led astray from the faith'; vi. 21: 'Some . . . have missed the mark concerning the faith.' Yet, in all these instances, the reference seems to be less to doctrine intellectually apprehended than to its character as a rule of life. Especially is this shown in the case of those who are described as having departed from the faith. Their errors are described, not as erroneous beliefs, but as moral obliquities.

But, regarding 'the Faith' in its intellectual aspect, as the system or framework of facts and doctrines presupposed in coming to God, there will be a natural tendency of thought to formulate its contents in propositions, few or many, simple or complex. 'God is'—'He is the rewarder of them that seek after Him,'—these may be regarded as Dogmas—a form of expressing truth on which much will have to be said hereafter. For the present let it suffice to point out that 'Dogma,' in its primary sense, is *Opinion* or *Judgment*—'that which seems good to a man'—predicated especially

of those cases in which the man is in a position to dictate his opinion to others. Hence, in general, the added connotation of *Authority*. In the LXX. and the New Testament, the word always signifies *decree*, whether of a secular ruler, as Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Augustus,[1] or else of ecclesiastical authorities—either Jewish, as in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians: 'The law of commandments contained in ordinances'—*dogmas*—and 'The bond written in ordinances—*dogmas*—that was against us, which was contrary to us';[2] or Christian, as in the Acts of the Apostles,[3] of the decisions of the Church with the Apostles and elders in Jerusalem. But in later Greek classical literature the word had already come to mean the doctrine of a philosopher or teacher, whose formula was 'So it seems to me.' Hence its post-apostolic Christian usage, as in Ignatius,[4] who speaks of 'the *dogmata*, or precepts of the Lord and His Apostles.' So in the Epistle of Barnabas: 'The *dogmata* of the Lord are three—having reference to life, faith, and hope.'[5] The Greek Fathers generally employ the term in a

[1] Dan. ii. 13; iii. 10, etc.; Luke ii. 1.
[2] Eph. ii. 15; Col. ii. 14 (where see Bp. Lightfoot's note).
[3] Acts xvi. 4. [4] *Ep. ad Magn.* xiii. [5] Barn. *Ep.* i. 6.

similar sense, including both doctrines and ordinances. Thus Basil speaks of 'the dogma of Christ's Divinity,' and Chrysostom of 'the dogmata of the Church.'[1] In general, however, it came to be applied chiefly to doctrine, the declaration of things to be believed. These are sometimes expressed as *heads* or *titles* of doctrine, as when we speak of the Dogma of the Trinity, or of the Atonement; and sometimes as formulated statements or definitions, as in the clauses of the Nicene and so-called Athanasian Creeds relating to the Nature of our Lord.

It should be noted, in passing, that the word *dogmatic* may be used in two different senses; between which it is necessary to distinguish. It may express either whatever relates to the formulated statement of belief, as when we speak of 'dogmatic theology,' or, less technically but perhaps more frequently, the spirit and temper with which such belief is presented,—assertion without proof, authoritative and peremptory. So again 'dogmatism' has by usage become almost restricted to the latter sense—the style of the

[1] Basil, *De Sp. Sancto*, cxxvii.; *Orat.* vi. in Hexaëm.; also on Ps. vii. p. 144; Isa. xvi. p. 1123; Chrysostom, Hom. vi. on Ep. to Philip., also Hom. xlvii. on Acts, and Hom. xxxiii. on 1 Cor.

teacher who affirms without reasoning, and demands the assent of his disciples on the strength of mere assertion. This temper, it may be remarked, is by no means peculiar to the Christian advocate. There is a dogmatism of unbelief, quite as unreasonable and overbearing as that of the most passionate sectarian. The spirit is that of the individual rather than of the Creed; and its only remedy lies in the culture of wisdom, justice, and charity.

Observe that *Dogma* and *Doctrine* are not quite the same thing. Many vindications of a 'dogmatic Christianity' are found, when examined, to consist mainly of arguments for doctrinal clearness and precision. The validity of such arguments may be fully recognised; and they are especially valuable in counteracting certain prevalent tendencies of thought. The possibility—even the desirableness—of a religion without doctrine is sometimes openly affirmed, oftener implicitly assumed. Hence we see on the one hand a vague indefinite religious sentiment, anchored upon no strong or clear convictions, and on the other a weak effeminate Evangelicalism, that never seeks coherence or system or comprehensiveness, but

confines itself to the quickening of emotion, without any solid basis of knowledge or of thought. 'Religion without Theology' does but illustrate the aphorism of Bacon: 'Certainly there be that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief.'[1] There is, however, an important distinction between doctrine as accepted by faith and the embodiment of it in dogma. 'Doctrine' is simply Teaching; and is the term employed throughout the Gospels for the instructions of our Lord. There, and afterwards in the Epistles, it is applied quite as much to the ethical as to the intellectual aspect of religion. The things that, in the First Epistle to Timothy, are described as 'contrary to the sound doctrine,' that is, 'to the healthful teaching,' are not heresies but immoralities.[2] The question, therefore, as to dogma is by no means prejudged when the value of Christian doctrine, definite, comprehensive, harmonious, has been fully vindicated. We shall have hereafter to dwell upon the inferences to be drawn from this distinction: enough that we simply note it now, and maintain as the starting-point of discussion the importance of a clear and correct doctrinal

[1] Essay I. *Of Truth.* [2] 1 Tim. i. 10.

belief. For if truth on the great subjects with which Theology has to do is attainable, we ought with our whole hearts to dedicate ourselves to the search.

And that, first of all, because it is Truth. We need no further reason. Truth, for the Truth's own sake, must be the principle of the inquirer—truth, independent of results. This, I know, is very elementary; yet in practice how frequently is it disregarded! That an opinion is 'dangerous' is often employed as an argument against it, when the readier confutation would have been to show that it is *false*. For whenever there is falsity, there must be danger, whether we discern it or not. And, conversely, it avails but little to argue that an opinion is safe; the question is always, whether it is true.

Then, secondly, because there is an intimate connection between Belief and Salvation.

In stating this, it is necessary once more to be quite clear as to the significance of our terms. What is salvation? What does it mean, not merely for the unseen future, but for the living present? What is the man, here and now? Is he already saved?—or, at least, is he being saved?

Is he converted from selfishness, unrighteousness, and lust, from blindness to the spiritual world, and disregard of God? Is he sincere and upright, faithful and devout? Does he love God and man? Is holiness his supreme desire and aim? Then in him are the beginnings of salvation; and from these we may discern what he shall hereafter become.

Now, if thus saved, it is, in Bible language, 'through faith,' which has brought him into contact with those mighty forces that have transformed his character and life. But again we must be accurate in the use of language. It is not '*for* faith,' as seems often loosely to be understood; as though faith were either a meritorious work, or an arbitrary condition of acceptance with God. Still less is it 'for' or 'on account of' his *belief*. Belief is valuable only as the answer of the intellect to the Faith that attaches the soul to Christ, and so affects the whole spiritual nature. Nay, we may point to cases not a few, where that answer is but feeble or mistaken. The man clings to the Saviour, but so clings amid the darkness. Interrogate him theologically; he can give no definite reply; or if he attempt one, it is such a

reply as you must needs condemn. The Creed may be erroneous, but the trust is real.

Yet it is important that a definite reply should be given. A mistaken belief must be, in one way or another, and sooner or later, an injury to faith; and unbelief condemns because it renders faith impossible, and so seals the separation of the soul from God.

Here are two sides of the same great truth, both worthy to be specially noted because of their frequent exaggeration and perversion. Undoubtedly there are two prevailing tendencies of thought, opposite to each other, but equally tending to misapprehension.

First, It has always been the disposition of theologians to attribute to belief, in itself considered, a moral character; so that every error, in all circumstances, is a sin. Hence many an olden creed thick-sown with anathemas; hence also the appalling series of religious persecutions, carried on in many cases by men devoutly in earnest, and as far as possible from being naturally cruel. These things belong to the history of the past, yet the spirit that prompted them lurks among us still. Often quoted is the text, doubtful

in itself,[1] and made more terrible in its translation: 'He that believeth not shall be damned.' These words, whether spoken by our Lord or not, have been so misapplied by ecclesiastics as to sustain the impression that mistaken views of religion are necessarily and essentially criminal. So easy has it been to read the text as though the words 'He that believeth not' meant 'He that believeth amiss,' that is, 'He who does not interpret Scripture as I do,' or 'as the Church enjoins.' The impression has enstamped itself upon our very language. The word *miscreant*, etymologically, is simply 'misbeliever'; but (perhaps owing to the associations of the Crusades) it has long come to mean a criminal of the very vilest class. So, even now, it is not uncommon to hear such epithets of condemnation hurled at the erroneous convictions of sincere men as ought to be reserved for the deepest moral obliquity.

This is one mistake; but I apprehend that in our own day there is far more danger of falling into the opposite extreme, and of forgetting that there is a distinctly traceable connection between

[1] Mark xvi. 16. See marginal note, R.V., and all critical editions of the Greek Testament. On the other hand, consult Dean Burgon's *The Last Twelve Verses of St. Mark's Gospel.*

creed and character. Dr. Pusey writes in one of his letters that 'to maintain that "it is of no importance what we believe," and that "one creed is as good as another," is the central heresy of our day.' Without going so far as this, we may still recognise that the spirit is abroad, expressed by Pope more than a century and a half ago:

> For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
> He can't be wrong whose life is in the right.[1]

Belief, it is said, in the last resort, is founded upon evidence. Define it as the acceptance of the testimony of God; it is still a question of evidence whether the testimony be really His or not; and the purely intellectual process by which this question is to be solved cannot have any moral quality. The process, we may reply, is not 'purely intellectual.' Its validity presupposes certain conditions—that the inquirer be honest, that the evidence be candidly and seriously weighed, that the desire to arrive at the truth be simple and sincere. These conditions are in many cases notoriously lacking. Some take up their opinions indolently, without any sense of

[1] *Essay on Man*, III. 305, 306.

responsibility or correspondingly earnest endeavour; often, again, the judgment is warped by passion, inclination, self-interest; and the will, biassed by pride, cowardice, or ambition, becomes a powerful factor in determining the conclusion. The Apostle Paul speaks of men who refused, or literally 'did not approve[1] to have God in their knowledge.' So the affirmation: 'He can't be wrong whose life is in the right' is either the most barren of truisms, or else an impressive warning. A truism, if by 'life' we are to understand the inward principles of a man as well as the outward conduct. Let these principles be 'in the right,' and the conduct be framed in accordance with them; then the man, of course, 'cannot be wrong.' But, if any more than this be intended, the words become a direct warning to see that the life be pure, in order that the faith may be pure also. I think our Lord intended something very like this by His profound saying: 'If any man willeth to do the will of God, he shall know of the teaching.'[2] It is a test that one must apply cautiously to others, severely to oneself. Our belief, it may be, is a sure though

[1] Rom. i. 28; *οὐκ ἐδοκίμασαν*. [2] John vii. 17.

unsuspected index to what we are. A belief which takes its form from a heart sincere before God and pure and true, whatever that belief may be, will not ruin the soul. What Richard Baxter wrote of his Papist opponents two hundred years ago, may be applied with a difference to not a few whose theological errors we are constrained to-day to condemn: 'I doubt not that God hath many sanctified ones among them, who have received the true doctrine of Christianity so practically that their contradictory errors prevail not against them, to hinder their love of God and their salvation; but that their errors are like a conquerable dose of poison, which a healthful nature doth overcome. And I can never believe,' Baxter adds, 'that a man may not be saved by that religion which doth but bring him to the true love of God and to a heavenly mind and life; nor that God will ever cast a soul into hell that truly loveth Him.'[1] This is as true as it is finely said. But it forms no such apology for hesitancy on matters of faith as is often pleaded in these days; as though it were somehow to a man's

[1] Baxter's *Life and Times* (Sylvester, 1696), p. 131. See Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Aphorisms on Spiritual Religion, viii. note.

credit not to have made up his mind. Has not a great poet written—

> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds.[1]

The comparison is, indeed, a little difficult to understand. 'Doubt' is an attitude of mind: 'the Creeds' are documents. The things contrasted are not upon the same plane. But what is meant, I suppose, is that the doubt which is sincere has more of the element of faith in it than unthinking acquiescence in any creed. To the dictum, so put, we should all assent. Only this is no reason for cherishing doubt, for resting in doubt. If there is a faith that 'lives in doubt,' it is the faith that there is a solution which the earnest inquiring spirit will not fail to find. It is believing in the light, although the light for the time may be eclipsed. The word *sceptic*, we are often reminded, literally means 'inquirer'; and, if we are honest, our purpose in inquiring is to get our questions answered. To linger in the twilight of half-convictions is but a melancholy position, especially for those who are to be the

[1] Tennyson, *In Memoriam* xcvi. (too often quoted apart from the context).

teachers and guides of others. Their highest hope must be that their doubts may be resolved, through earnest endeavour and prayer. Then, indeed, that twilight will prove to have been the twilight of the morning; and the dawn of day will bring to the inquirer the priceless blessing of an honest Faith.

And here we meet the demand for verification, often pressed upon theologians by scientific thinkers. For, in science, this is the one sufficient test of any propounded doctrine. We believe in gravitation, because the theory is verified by every experiment that we try. We believe in the revolution of the earth round the sun, because all the known phenomena are thus explained. So in other than scientific beliefs. I trust the disinterested affection of my friend, because it has been tested and may be tested again. It stands as a truth of daily life, as much as of religion, that we 'walk by faith'—faith, that we are always of necessity putting to the proof, for verification, or else for disillusion and disappointment. But what of the supersensuous facts which the Christian Creed affirms? Can we test them by

any analogous methods of proof? Now, in meeting this question, we do not in the least surrender the other arguments by which our belief is confirmed. Our Apologetic is manifold. The Revelation that wins our belief commends itself on historical grounds; and its external evidence is reinforced by its intrinsic qualities, its self-consistency, its moral perfection, its accord with a sound philosophy, its proved adaptation to the spiritual needs of man.[1] These points may all be reasoned out, but still the chief attestation is in the experience of those who have accepted the Revelation as true, and can show what it has wrought in their own hearts and lives. To trust this answer is in accord with the highest Reason. God speaks within us, and we hear His voice. This again gives weight and cogency to the historical proof. The realities to which it bears attestation are closely, inseparably connected with the facts and events to which Revelation bears

[1] See Dr. A. B. Bruce: *Apologetics, or Christianity Defensively Stated*, ch. v. Prebendary Wace well remarks: 'The testimony of Christians to the fact that in their personal experience they have found the promises of the Gospel fulfilled, must carry, and does carry, the greatest possible weight, but it can only afford indirect support to the truths beyond their experience which are alleged in the Creeds.' The attestation, however, is *primâ facie*.

witness. It is thus that they are accounted for, and in no other way. The key is verified by the opening of the lock. Their evidence may be indirect, but it is sufficient and triumphant. Such verification is to be trusted, beyond all processes of the understanding. To those who impugn our faith in the Son of God, we have the answer ready with which the man to whom He had given sight met the cavils of Jewish rationalism. 'Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened mine eyes.'[1] So in moments when we are tempted to doubt or to distrust:

> If e'er, when faith had fallen asleep,
> I heard a voice: 'Believe no more';
> And heard an ever-breaking shore
> That tumbled in the godless deep;
>
> A warmth within the breast would melt
> The freezing reason's colder part,
> And like a man in wrath the heart
> Stood up and answered: 'I have felt.'[2]

For the sake, then, of a man's own self, for his salvation in the highest sense, it is of importance that he should be led into the Truth, that his

[1] John ix. 30. [2] *In Memoriam*, cxxiv.

view of religious matters should accord with the reality, that his Faith in its intellectual aspect should harmonise with that deeper Faith that controls and inspires his life. But now the question returns—How is this intellectual view to be gained, clearly, adequately; and, when gained, how is it to be expressed?

In answer to these questions, it must, first of all, be said that the belief, to be worth anything, must be the man's own, the dictate of his own understanding, with the consent of his own will. He cannot believe to any good purpose on the mere testimony of other men, experts though they be: he must be himself the expert, and the verification of which I have spoken must at least have begun in his own soul.

No doubt our religious beliefs have generally, in the first instance, come to us on authority. The child who has had the happiness of a Christian education has been schooled to belief by parents and teachers. In the earlier stages of his mental history, there has not been, and could not be, any question of independent judgment; and the verification by the experiences of childhood, though real, has been almost uncon-

scious. From this attitude of receptiveness the first step to independence is often one of hesitation and resistance. 'Man's first word,' says Archdeacon Hare, 'is *Yes;* his second *No;* his third and last *Yes.* Most stop short at the first; very few get to the last.'[1] But it is the period marked by that second word that forms the crisis of his spiritual career. Unspeakably momentous is the summons to meet the Divine Oracle face to face, and in place of following the most trusted teachers, to hear what God the Lord hath spoken. Not until that great transition has been made has any one the right to say 'I believe, and therefore speak.'

It is true that individual responsibility by no means excludes or renders unnecessary the help of other minds. The Dogma, which is man's version of the Divine thought, is valuable as testimony, helpful as interpretation. The belief of any wise and good man must needs exert some influence upon our own; and how much more the belief of many? Undoubtedly there is a strong presumption in favour of what is witnessed to us by a multitude of accordant minds, declaring kindred

[1] *Guesses at Truth*, p. 263 (ed. 1866).

convictions and common experiences from age to age. To such utterance we cannot afford to be indifferent, whether expressed in Creed or Song (for our hymns also are often virtual creeds). We listen with grateful deference, yet never with absolute surrender.

Such surrender, as we know, is in these days claimed from us with a new imperiousness, in the name of Church Authority. The claim, in its extreme form, is that of Romanism. Thus the late Cardinal Manning asserted—

> That God has not only revealed His Truth, but has made a divine and imperishable provision for the custody, perpetuity, and promulgation of His Truth to the world; that is to say, through the channel of His Church, divinely founded, divinely preserved from error, and divinely assisted in the declaration of Truth.[1]

Now to meet claims like these, urged sometimes from very unexpected quarters, will unquestionably be among the chief necessities of the coming generation. The old questions, between the Church and the Bible, the Church and the individual, are pressing upon us with new force; and conflicts are waged around us in which it is

[1] *Contemporary Review*, vol. xxiv. 153.

not always the avowed Romanist who appears as the antagonist of Christian freedom. Very important is it therefore on every ground to go back to the first principles of ecclesiastical truth. And we at least in this place have no difficulty as to the right definition of the Church. Such definition must clearly be given before we can decide respecting the claim. The Church, then, is the whole company of those who trust and follow Jesus Christ. And it may be at once conceded that an ideal Church, could its testimony but be obtained, would be a competent witness to Divine Truth. That is to say, if you could first discover the whole company of the faithful upon earth, separating them from false professors and the secretly rebellious, and could then interrogate their deepest consciousness as to the basis of their belief and the grounds of their hope, laying out of the question all that was non-essential, or adventitious, or due to mere human infirmity, thus securing a declaration at once adequate and complete—the answer you would receive would go far to make a perfect Creed. In an important sense, also, the testimony would be *authoritative;* that is, it would have the authority of experience and

conviction, and would be a true witness to the Spirit of God in the soul. Such is the spirit of the well-known rule of Vincentius of Lerinum. He pronounces that to be the Truth, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est*[1]—'That which is believed always, everywhere, and by all.' A rule, in truth, of imposing sound, of which the best brief criticism that I know was given by the late Archbishop Magee, who writes—'I have just two difficulties respecting it:

'First, that I have never been able to prove the rule.

'Secondly, that I have never been able, assuming it to be true, to prove anything by it.'[2]

The conditions are, in fact, impossible. The true Church is unseen, excepting by the eye of God. Its voice is broken and confused at the best. It could but bid us back to Scripture and Conscience; and thither, as the Reformers saw, we might as well have repaired at the first.

When the very reasonable inquiry is made where this voice of the Church has been uttered, and through what authoritative channels, we are oftentimes referred to Christian Antiquity, and to

[1] *Commonitorium*, ii. (A.D. 434). [2] *Life*, vol. ii. p. 103.

General Councils, by which some at least of the Creeds were settled. But the reference to such assemblies as authoritative breaks down at every step. For one thing, there never has been a General Council, in the sense in which œcumenicity is claimed. The assembly in Jerusalem, of which we read in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, was not a General Council, but a Church-meeting ; nor did it attempt to formulate articles of faith, only to ascertain and express the Divine will concerning some important points of discipline and practice. And the rest of these assemblies, from Nicæa onwards, were, one and all, such imperfect representations of the Church Universal, and their proceedings were so marred by human infirmities and secular ambitions, as to make it impossible to accept them as the authorised exponents of Divine Truth. I know it is said that the Holy Spirit, promised to the people of God in council assembled, directed and overruled their proceedings for good, in spite of these infirmities. But this is mere assumption. Many links would have to be supplied, in a chain of argument that would show the promise made by our Lord to His disciples to lead them into all truth, to have

been applicable to the clergy in distinction from the laity, to the bishops pre-eminently among the clergy, and most of all to bishops assembled in council, at the call of Constantine or any other earthly potentate. The dogmas of Councils also must be submitted to the test of Scripture, and the result of such examination will only too surely be to confirm the Twenty-first Article of the Church of England: 'That when General Councils are gathered together, forasmuch as they be an assembly of men whereof all be not governed by the Spirit and Word of God, they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture.'

That any dogmas, again, should be enforced by *vote* upon the intellect and conscience of the faithful, is a painful absurdity. Votes go by majorities, and the majority may depend, as it has been said, upon the 'odd man.' There is no doubt that in mere questions of expediency, of social convenience, or of political arrangement, this rough-and-ready rule of submission to the

greater number is inevitable. But majorities have no divine claim to infallibility; and very possibly, on the deeper questions of life, the minority, to say the least, is quite as often right as wrong! Then, the vote of a majority is reversible, as the tide of feeling turns; and the dogma of to-day becomes the heresy of to-morrow. This belief in a majority, says the late Dr. Hatch—

> Is a conception which comes rather from politics than from philosophy. It is the conception, that the definitions and interpretations of primary beliefs which are made by the majority of Church officers assembled under certain conditions are in all cases and so certainly true, that the duty of the individual is, not to endeavour, by whatever light of nature or whatever illumination of the Holy Spirit may be given to him, to understand them, but to acquiesce in the verdict of the majority. The theory assumes that God never speaks to men except through the voice of the majority. It is a large assumption. It is a transference to the transcendental sphere in which the highest conceptions of the Divine Nature move, of what is a convenient practical rule for conducting the business of human society: *Let the majority decide.*[1]

Nothing can supersede either the responsibility or the right of the individual; and *Athanasius contra mundum*, as the old saying runs, declared

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, xi. p. 331.

the will of God as truly in the evil days of Rimini and Sirmium as when the whole Council of Nicæa had acclaimed his testimony.

Again, the notion that when once dogmas are voted they henceforth become conditions of eternal salvation, although they might have been contradicted with impunity before, is an absurdity if possible more monstrous still. I have before me a Romish Controversial Catechism, published in 1846,[1] with an ecclesiastical *imprimatur*, where the following question and answer occur :—

'*Q.* Must not Catholics believe the Pope in himself to be infallible?

'*A.* This is a Protestant invention: it is no article of the Catholic faith: no decision of his can oblige under pain of heresy, unless it be received and enforced by the teaching body; that is, by the Bishops of the Church.'

But at the Vatican Council of 1870, the dogma of Papal Infallibility (apart from such concurrence of the Bishops) was decreed as an article of the Faith. In 1846 it was a 'Protestant invention,'

[1] *Controversial Catechism, or Protestantism Refuted and Catholicism Established, by an Appeal to the Holy Scriptures, the Testimony of the Holy Fathers, and the Dictates of Reason.* By the Rev. Stephen Keenan. Edinburgh.

which the faithful Romanist was free to repudiate; in 1871 it had become a doctrine to be professed under pain of mortal sin! Common-sense would decide that if true now, it had been true always, unless a new gift of inspiration had been divinely imparted to the Popes of the nineteenth century,—a thesis which probably no one will venture to affirm.

Mr. Ruskin has written in his picturesque way:

> There is therefore, in matter of doctrine, *no such thing* as the Authority of the Church. We might as well talk of the authority of a morning cloud. There may be light *in* it, but the light is not of it; and it diminishes the light that it gets; and lets less of it through than it receives, Christ being its sun. Or, we might as well talk of the authority of a flock of sheep—for the Church is a body to be taught and fed, not to teach and feed; and of all sheep that are fed on earth, Christ's sheep are the most simple (the children of this generation are wiser), always losing themselves; doing little else in this world *but* lose themselves; never finding themselves; always found by Some One else; getting perpetually into sloughs, and snows, and bramble thickets; like to die there, but for their Shepherd, who is for ever finding them and bearing them back, with torn fleeces and eyes full of fear.[1]

The half-truth thus eloquently expressed needs, no doubt, to be supplemented by another view of

[1] *Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds*, p. 19.

the Church's mission. *Ecclesia docens* is still a reality. The Church, as part of its high calling, is set to teach. It is a pillar and support of the Truth; although it is not, as both the Authorised and Revised Versions make it in 1 Tim. iii. 15, '*the* pillar and foundation.'

There are few passages of the New Testament (writes the late Dr. Anthony Hort) in which the reckless disregard of the presence or absence of the Article has made wilder havoc of the sense than this. To speak of either an Ecclesia or the Ecclesia as being *the* pillar of the truth, is to represent the truth as a building, standing in the air supported on a single column. Again, there is no clear evidence that the rare word ἑδραίωμα ever means 'ground' = 'foundation.' It is rather, in accordance with the almost universal Latin rendering, *firmamentum*, a 'stay' or 'bulwark.' St. Paul's idea, then, is that each living society of Christian men is a pillar or stay of 'the Truth,' as an object of belief and a guide of life for mankind; each such Christian society bearing its part in sustaining and supporting the one truth common to all.[1]

While, then, we reverently listen to the voice of the Christian Congregation, whether in the smaller societies of the faithful or in their aggregated numbers, so far as their collective utterance can be heard, we still claim the right to hear and to interpret for ourselves, as far as in us lies, the

[1] *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 174.

Oracles of God. For we are personally responsible. In fact, we are compelled to take this individual position; for the voices that we hear are discordant, as, in the course of these Lectures, we shall often have occasion to remark. Meantime, the principle may be reiterated, that not the most widely accepted Dogma, not the most venerable Creed, must be suffered to prevail against the voice of Conscience, informed by independent study of the Divine Scriptures, with the resources of enlightened Reason, and in humble dependence upon the promised guidance of the Spirit of God.

I remember well how, nearly twenty years ago, in a discussion on the question of Creeds, at a great gathering of Nonconformists in London, the Articles of a Creed were likened approvingly by one of the speakers to guide-posts, fixed at intervals along an Alpine pass, rising high above the snows, and marking out the road for travellers, who else might have been bewildered and lost. The simile was felt by many to be appropriate and felicitous. But another speaker afterwards rejoined:

> I am afraid that I have but an imperfect appreciation of guide-posts in matters which concern spiritual faith and

hope in a human soul. They seem to me chiefly helpful to those who have lost sight of or faith in the living Leader. 'When foemen watch our tents by night,' I would get me nearer to the living Captain; 'when mists hang wide o'er moor and fell,' I would feel for the hand of the living Guide.[1]

In the spirit of these words, let us enter upon our investigation of the Church's Creeds and Confessions. These great utterances of Christian thought we would not undervalue; only we would estimate them rightly. We shall find in them both help and warning; and the result of our inquiry will have been achieved if only we be led back, with a larger appreciation and a deeper confidence, to the living and mighty Word of the Living and Eternal God.

[1] See *Proceedings of the Congregational Union*, 1878.

LECTURE II

THE EARLIEST CREEDS: SCRIPTURE AND THE ANCIENT CHURCH

My present purpose is to trace what may be called, in current phrase, the Evolution of Creed. The contrast between the method of Scripture and the methods of the Churches in the presentation of Truth is so striking that we may well inquire into the process by which the transition was effected, from the historical and unsystematic way in which doctrine is set forth by Evangelists and Apostles, to the order, symmetry, and attempted completeness of ecclesiastical formulas. We shall have hereafter to dwell upon this contrast, and to educe from it some lessons for ourselves; meantime, we simply note that the tendency to selection, arrangement, classification, theory, is but according to the laws of the human mind. Theology, like

every other science, has formed its systems by collocation and comparison of facts or phenomena, with the generalisations thence resulting. Such phenomena, in the present case, are the records and declarations of Scripture, with the facts of man's own spiritual being. These form a sufficient groundwork for theological system: the recourse to tradition, and the influence of current philosophies, have given a direction to Christian thought which, as we shall see, has been in more than one respect opposed to the simplicity that is in Christ.

First of all, then, we turn to Scripture, with the inquiry whether we have there in any form the rudiments of Creed. The Old Testament Church had its formula, simple and sublime: 'Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.' This was the confession of every devout Jew—his watchword in life, his viaticum in death. What have we in the New Testament answering to this?

1. We may note the spontaneous confessions of disciples on whom the truth has dawned with sudden glory; or who have been led to it by their own thought and reflection. Thus, Nicodemus

begins his interview with Jesus by declaring a belief in Him founded upon miracle: 'Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these signs that Thou doest, except God be with him.'[1] Nathanael had already given utterance to a larger and deeper faith: 'Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art King of Israel.'[2] Such words expressed a preliminary stage of conviction—the first lesson of the Kingdom. Then, afterwards, in the central hour of our Lord's ministry, we have the great avowal of the Apostle Peter, on his own behalf and that of his fellow-disciples. 'Who say ye that I am?' the Master had solemnly demanded; 'and Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'[3] These words have well been called the first Apostles' Creed, the confession of the Truth upon which the Church is so built that 'the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.' Akin to this was the creed of Martha, the sister of Lazarus: 'Yea, Lord: I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even He that cometh into the world.'[4] Thus was the

[1] John iii. 2. [2] John i. 49.
[3] Matt. xvi. 16. [4] John xi. 27.

climax of belief attained, so far as was possible during the earthly ministry of Christ. But when that ministry was over, a yet profounder faith in Him was to spring from His resurrection—a faith which found utterance in one burning phrase from the lips of Thomas—the voice of overwhelming conviction and a sublime confession of belief: 'My Lord and my God!'[1]

2. In the Apostolic writings we repeatedly find references to a type or form of doctrine based upon such early confessions, regarded by many of the best modern expositors as indicating the existence of a recognised standard of belief enjoined by the teachers of the Church. Thus the Apostle Paul, in writing to the Romans, gives God thanks that 'they became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching into which they were delivered'[2]—the teaching being, perhaps, represented by a bold figure as the mould or matrix in which their Christian character had received its shape. And afterwards (assuming that the Pastoral Epistles are his), in writing to Timothy, he bids his young disciple to 'hold the pattern of healthful words which he had heard'[3]—an injunction which has

[1] John xx. 28. [2] Rom. vi. 17. [3] 2 Tim. i. 13.

been thought to imply some formula of doctrine in which the great verities of the Gospel were expressed. If this interpretation be admitted, it would also explain the exhortation given to Timothy in both Epistles to 'guard the deposit' —'the good deposit'—something specific; as when the same disciple is reminded that he 'had confessed the good confession in the sight of many witnesses.'[1] A similar reference, but of a more general kind, was quoted in the first Lecture from the Epistle of Jude, exhorting professed believers to 'contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.'[2]

Now, supposing these passages to point to any recognised form of Christian confession, we are left very much to conjecture with regard to its character. Something, however, may be gathered from scattered indications. Thus in the Epistle to the Romans: 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.'[3] In the first Epistle to the Corinthians: 'I delivered unto you first of all

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 12.
[2] Jude 3. [3] Rom. x. 9.

that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.'[1] The note of simplicity is in all such Creeds. They single out some great Christian truth which implies the rest, or which, it may be, pre-eminently met the need of the hour—a truth that was challenged, and which it was therefore specially important to assert. Such a declaration, again, occurs in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: 'To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him';[2] as well as in the repeated protests of the beloved disciple against the heresies of his day: 'Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also'; 'Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God'; 'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?'[3]

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 6.
[3] 1 John ii. 23; iv. 2; v. 5.

In a different way, the elementary articles of the Christian Creed are recognised in the Epistle to the Hebrews as rudiments, presupposed in the endeavour after higher knowledge: 'Leaving the word of the beginning of the Christ, let us press on unto perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.'[1] Here the several articles of belief are presented in their more practical aspect, relating to the first principles of the Christian life, the ordinances of the Church, and the revelation of futurity. A profounder view of the foundation truth of Christianity is given in the Epistle to the Colossians: 'the full assurance of understanding,'—'to know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.'[2] Here, in no uncertain way, Christ in His revealed personality is set forth as the centre of all creeds; a truth expanded in the First Epistle to Timothy, where the same mystery is declared to be 'One who was manifested in flesh, justified in spirit, beheld by angels,

[1] Heb. vi. 1, 2. [2] Col. ii. 2.

proclaimed among nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory'[1]: a series of antithetic statements, in which the balanced sentences suggest elaboration, as of a prepared Confession, or perhaps of a Hymn, celebrating the successive steps of the great manifestation; personal—in flesh and spirit; revealed—to angels and men; glorified—by faith upon earth and exaltation in heaven. Such expressions would naturally pass into formulas, imprinted on the memory of believers, and serving as guides and supports of their faith until, with a larger and clearer apprehension, they should discern and grasp the truth for themselves.

The great variety, however, of these statements of the truth seems to show that they were not intended to indicate, much less to enforce, any specific form of declaration. They set the teaching in different lights; but they do not, separately or together, constitute a Creed. Rather do they suggest that the manifoldness of the truth forbids its limitation to any fixed dogmatic forms; and that every attempt in this direction will be only too likely to miss some phase or aspect of the Divine

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

teaching essential to completeness. It is here, as in much besides, that we recognise the difference between the Creeds of the Churches and the Oracles of God.

3. Beyond these separate statements, we find the germ of the greater Creeds of the ancient Church in the Baptismal Commission of the risen Christ. 'Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'[1] The confession of this Name, then, was the indispensable condition of baptism; while yet it is not a little singular that neither in the Apostolic history nor in the Epistles is there any direct indication of the form in which such confession was made.[2] The form, indeed, seems to have been kept 'as a treasure too precious to be profaned by publicity.' In the writings of Cyprian, about A.D. 250, it appears as *symbolum*, afterwards, in Greek writers, *σύμβολον*, 'symbol' or 'pass-word,' as between soldiers in an army or confederates in some hazardous enterprise. It is easy to understand how appropriate,

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

[2] The confession attributed to the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts viii. 37, although no part of the original text, is a valuable testimony to early Church tradition on the subject.

in days of persecution, this word would be felt to be.

We find other formulas, without any adjunct or explanation, in the *Didaché*:—'Now concerning baptism, baptize thus: Having first taught all these things, baptize ye into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in living water.'[1] The teaching here indicated, it is worth while to note, is simply ethical. In this oldest of Church documents there is no dogmatic creed whatever. The era of theological definition had not yet set in; and when afterwards a further confession of truth was engrafted on the baptismal form, it was purposely guarded as a secret—a fact which renders it difficult to trace the steps by which the simple baptismal confession was expanded into a Creed.

Such expansion, however, plainly forms the groundwork of the three Creeds which have come down to us as the chief monuments of Christian antiquity; having their origin in the controversies of successive generations, and by degrees absorbing all other proposed Confessions of Faith. Of these Creeds, every one of which, it has been observed,

[1] Ch. vii.

bears a title to which it has no real right, the first, called the 'Apostles' Creed,' was formed by a very gradual process of development, in several Churches and through successive centuries. The second, known as the 'Nicene Creed,' was the outcome of long theological controversy, and was ratified by the solemn decisions of ecclesiastical councils. The third, the so-called 'Athanasian Creed,' is of unknown origin, and acquired currency in great measure from its adaptation to liturgical use. Various as these documents are in their several characteristics, they are one in being expositions of the Triune Name.

I

The so-called APOSTLES' CREED, the first of the three in value and importance, was in reality chronologically the second—at least in its complete shape.[1] There is no evidence, I need scarcely say, to connect it directly with the Apostles. This fact is known by every student of Christian Antiquity, although in our own day the Creed is constantly grouped by ecclesiastics with the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, as though

[1] See Appendix, Note 2, *Latin Text of the Apostles' Creed.*

all three were co-ordinate in authority. Even Richard Hooker writes—'We have from the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ received that brief Confession of Faith which hath been always a badge of the Church, a mark whereby to discern Christian men from infidels and Jews.'[1]

An early Church tradition, first found in a sermon erroneously attributed to Augustine, appears to rest, like so many other traditions, on a mistaken etymology. The word *symbol*, *σύμβολον*, was read as from the Greek *συμβολή*, or in the plural *συμβολαί*, a repast to which every one brought his own contribution—a kind of picnic. Thus—

Peter	said,	'I believe in God the Father Almighty.'
John	,,	'Creator of Heaven and earth.'
James	,,	'And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.'
Andrew	,,	'Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.'
Philip	,,	'He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.'
Thomas	,,	'He descended into hell, the third day He rose again.'
Bartholomew	,,	'He ascended into Heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.'

[1] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, v. 42.

Matthew	said,	'From whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.'
James the Less	,,	'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church.'
Simon Zelotes	,,	'The Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins.'
Jude the brother of James	,,	'The resurrection of the flesh.'
Matthias	,,	'The life everlasting. Amen.'[1]

There are, in other versions of the story, some different distributions of the articles among the Twelve; but the whole is a monkish fiction, probably of the sixth century, only worth noting here as a specimen of the kind of belief which could retain a hold upon the minds of theologians otherwise intelligent and cultured. For even the learned Bishop Beveridge, so late as the beginning of the eighteenth century, in his *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, could gravely repeat the story, without expressing any doubt as to its authenticity.[2]

We turn then to the actual course of development. There are traces in early fragments of Christian literature of the Baptismal formula in a

[1] See Appendix, Note 3, *The Tradition in Latin Verse.* Longfellow employs the legend as Epilogue to his *Divine Tragedy.*

[2] Beveridge, *Works* (ed. Hartwell Horne, 1824), p. 283.

catechetical shape; the candidate being asked, 'Dost thou believe in God the Father?' and again, 'in Jesus Christ His only Son?' and again, 'in the Holy Spirit?' immersion in many instances taking place at each several avowal of belief. The facts and doctrines inculcated, in addition to this simple profession, formed the *symbolum* or secret, indicated in many early writings, but nowhere explicitly detailed, until we come to Irenæus, near the close of the second century, who, in combating the errors and speculations of his time, repeatedly declares the substance of the Christian faith. One passage is as follows:—

> The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the Apostles and their disciples this faith: In one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the Prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a Virgin, and the Passion, and the Resurrection from the dead, and the Ascension into Heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus our Lord, and His manifestation from Heaven in the glory of the Father, to gather all things into one, and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race.[1]

[1] *Against Heresies*, book i. ch. x. (Clark's ed. vol. i. p. 42).

But even this enumeration is hardly in any true sense a Creed. It lacks succinctness; it is essentially rhetorical, and plainly incomplete. Whilst it constitutes, no doubt, a declaration of the general belief of the Church, this belief is evidently set forth in the language of Irenæus himself, as in other passages of his writings, where the same truths are variously expressed. So likewise with Tertullian, ten years later, who uses, it may be observed, the term *Regula Fidei*:—

> The Rule of Faith is wholly one, alone, immovable, and irreformable—the rule, to wit, of believing in one only God omnipotent, the Creator of the Universe, and His Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised again the third day from the dead, received in the Heavens, sitting now at the right hand of the Father, destined to come to judge living and dead, through the resurrection of the flesh as well as of the Spirit.[1]

The pupil and follower of Tertullian, Cyprian of Carthage, gives substantially the same Articles, but in a catechetical form, as a Baptismal Confession; and from a comparison of these in corresponding passages from other writers, we arrive

[1] *De Virginibus Velandis*, c. i. (Clark's ed. vol. iii. p. 154). See also *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. xiii. (vol. ii. p. 16).

at the following, as in substance the primitive Roman Creed. (I am quoting from the late Dr. Hatch).[1]

I believe in God Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, His Son our Lord, who was born of a Virgin, crucified under Pontius Pilate, the third day rose again from the dead, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, from whence He is coming to judge the living and dead; and in the Holy Spirit.[2]

To this simple Creed early additions were made, varying in different communities, and leading to a larger general recension. Two almost identical forms of the Creed in the fourth century are respectively given—in Greek by Marcellus of Ancyra in Galatia, and in Latin by Rufinus of Aquileia in North Italy, which agree in the clauses —'the Father Almighty, Only-begotten Son, born of the Holy Ghost, crucified and buried, ascended into Heaven, the Holy Church, the Resurrection of the flesh.'

In succeeding writers fresh articles appear, either as the attacks of heresy might seem to require, or as individual theologians might dwell

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, xi. p. 318.

[2] Compare Harnack, *Apostolische Glaubensbekenntniss*, 1893 (tr. in *Nineteenth Century* of that year), and Dr. Swete's criticism in *The Apostles' Creed*, Cambridge, 1898.

on special points. Thus the phrase, 'He descended into Hell'—*descendit in inferna*—appears for the first time near the end of the fourth century, in the writings of Rufinus; the epithet 'Catholic,' as applied to the Church, comes also from Aquileia, its earliest known occurrence, as an epithet of the Church, being in the writings of Nicetas, about the middle of the fifth century. The 'Communion of Saints' appears just a hundred years later; and the whole Creed as we have it is given for the first time in a Treatise by the German abbot Pirminius, two hundred years after that, or A.D. 750.[1]

It is a significant fact that this evolutionary process was conducted without the interposition of authority. No General Council, no ecclesiastical rulers, enforced the Creed: its adoption rested entirely on the consensus of Churches; and the reference to it by various authors is simply by way of testimony—'Such and such are the beliefs of Christians'—selected from the great mass of opinions as worthy to be put forth as dogmas. *Selection* was here, as always, a main factor in

[1] Heurtley's *Harmonia Symbolica*, p. 70. The work of Pirminius is entitled '*Libellus Pirminii de singulis libris Canonicis scarapsus* (? *scriptus*)' (Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. lxxxix.).

the process of development. Some Articles were evidently held and declared from the beginning, others mark a growth of opinion, and belong, both in belief and in declaration, to a later age. Some clauses again were added, and afterwards eliminated as inexact, or ambiguous, or unnecessary. Thus in Rufinus we find the epithets 'invisible' and 'impassible' applied to God the Father; and, what is yet more significant, the earliest mention of the 'Holy Church' is directly associated with the forgiveness of sins; the candidate for baptism, as we read in Cyprian, being required to say: 'I believe the remission of sins and the life everlasting through the Holy Church.'[1] This form of expression is afterwards dropped, and belief in the Holy Church is affixed as a separate article, the epithet 'Catholic' being subsequently added, and 'the Communion of Saints' appended. The question is an interesting one, whether 'the Communion of Saints' was at first intended as a further definition of the Church, or as an added particular; whether the Creed declared that the Universal Church is the fellowship or communion

[1] *Epistle to Januarius* 69 (Oxford ed. 70), sec. 2; *Ep. to Magnus* 75 (Oxford ed. 69), sec. 7 (Clark's ed. vol. i. pp. 251, 308).

of all the holy, or whether that the Church, as a definite and visible Society on earth, is in fellowship with the Saints everywhere, especially with the glorified. On the whole, I am inclined to hold by the former explanation.

It is remarkable that Luther, in adopting the Creed, altered the word *Catholic* into *Christian*—'I believe in the Holy Christian Church'; while the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism retain 'Christian,' but translate the word 'Catholic' as *universal*—'a holy universal Christian Church.' There is much to be said for these readings of the Creed—only the effect is to surrender the word Catholic; and we may well ask whether the wiser policy would not have been to maintain the claim of the Evangelical Churches to the word in its true significance. Let the word be once abandoned, and the concession will be used to the disadvantage of those who thus appear to disclaim the thing signified by it. It is, in fact, often represented as a contradiction that Protestants should claim a place in the Holy Catholic Church. There is a point at which the yielding to conventionality in such a matter becomes thoughtlessness, and leads to grave misapprehension.

Unless we distinctly mean 'universal,' the word 'Catholic' had better not be employed. But granting this definition, the word is of unspeakable value as expressing one of the most glorious characteristics of the great invisible Church of God.[1]

This clause is perhaps the principal ambiguity of the Creed. But there are others which prove a stumbling-block to thoughtful minds. Thus when it is said of our Lord that 'He descended into hell,' it is asked whether this is to be understood of the abode of lost souls, or of Hades, the place of all the departed; much more, again, why such an Article should have been included among the essentials of the Faith. On these points there have been many controversies; and it is doubtful whether the clause conveys any definite meaning to the average mind. It is unfortunate when a Creed requires more explanation than the Scripture which it is intended to elucidate. The Westminster Confession, it may be noted, so interprets the Article as to evade the difficulty; adding the note, '*i.e.* continued in the state of the dead and under the power of death until the third day.'

[1] Ignatius, *Ep. to the Smyrnæans*, c. vii.: 'Wherever Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church' (ὅπου ἂν ᾖ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία).

A similar remark applies to the clause which affirms 'the resurrection of the flesh'[1]—or, as it reads in an early document, 'the resurrection of this flesh.'[2] In the usual English form in the Prayer Book, we have 'the resurrection of the body'—a free translation of the original; the word *flesh*, however, being retained in the Baptismal Service and the Office for the Visitation of the Sick. The phrase seems to have been originally derived from a misapplication of Job's words in the well-known passage, 'Yet in my flesh shall I see God';[3] but apart from this, it was used as an antidote to the false gnosis which restricted the blessing of redemption to the spiritual nature of man.

This Creed, it should be added, belongs to the Western Churches alone. It is unknown in the East. The Papal, the Lutheran, the Calvinistic Reformed, the Moravian, and the Anglican communions unite in its adoption. For many generations, and in countless assemblies, it has been the one accepted utterance of the Christian verity.

[1] 'Resurrectionem carnis': 'hujus carnis' (Rufinus).

[2] See the discussion of the use of *carnis* in Dr. Swete's *The Apostles' Creed: its relation to Primitive Christianity*, 1894, ch. ix.

[3] Job xix. 26.

We are not blind to these claims upon our reverential regard; but even these are secondary to the authority of Scripture, and must be no bar to our serious and devout criticism.[1] The Westminster Divines, in appending the Creed to their Confession, well and wisely say:

> Albeit the substance of the doctrine comprised in that Abridgment commonly called the Apostles' Creed be fully set forth in each of the Catechisms, so as there is no necessity of inserting the Creed itself, yet it is here annexed, not as though it were composed by the Apostles, or ought to be esteemed canonical Scripture, as the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, but because it is a brief view of the Christian Faith, agreeable to the Word of God, and anciently received in the Churches of Christ.

II

Side by side with the process of development which has been described, were other ecclesiastical movements, resulting in the formulation of a second Creed, commonly called the NICENE, from the famous Council of Nicæa, A.D. 325, at which its main Articles were adopted, although they were in great measure taken from earlier confessions by individual teachers and churches. In this Council

[1] See Appendix, Note 4, *Discussion of the Creed in the Reformed Church of Geneva*, 1869.

we witness an entirely new departure. Instead of the gradual development of Christian thought, seeking greater definiteness of expression from age to age, and resting upon general acquiescence, we have profound theological discussions, the settlement of dogmas by vote, and the claim of infallibility.

The history of the Nicene Council has been often told, and is familiar to all students of ecclesiastical history. Its immediate occasion was the outbreak of the Arian controversy respecting the Person of the Son of God; and the Creed, in the fulness and precision of its statements on this great subject, plainly declares its origin. In fact, as it left the Council, the Creed was rather a manifesto on the Deity and Humanity of Christ than in any general sense a Christian Confession. As will be shown in a subsequent Lecture, it had a direct controversial bearing against the various heresies of the age. It terminated abruptly. After the Articles relating to the Son of God, it simply added: 'And in the Holy Ghost'; appending an anathema, and so setting the example which other ecclesiastical assemblies have only too faithfully followed. The sentence

runs—'But those that say—There was a time when He was not; and Before He was begotten, He was not; and that He came into existence from what was not; or who profess that the Son of God is of a different hypostasis or substance, or that He was created, or changeable, or variable, are anathematised by the Catholic Church.'

The Confession was signed by the bishops present, to the number of 318, the first recorded instance in ecclesiastical history of subscription to articles of faith.[1] I fear it must be added that the practice of evasion, and the subterfuge of 'a non-natural sense' in the case of some who appended their names, entered at the same time. But of this hereafter.[2]

It appeared for the moment as if the controversy were settled. Constantine, in imperial rough-and-ready style, at once decreed the banishment of Arius, with all who might refuse to subscribe the Nicæan formula. They were henceforth to be called 'Porphyrians,' after the early Pagan opponent of the Gospel; the books of Arius were to be consigned to the flames, and any

[1] See Lect. VI.

[2] See Appendix, Note 5, *Greek Text of the Creed.*

one detected in concealing them was to be put to death.[1]

But it was not so easy to check the movements of thought. One word in the Creed, *homoousios*, 'of the same substance (with the Father)'—a word that had come down from the Greek literature of the Early Church[2]—failed to command universal concurrence. There were still many who pleaded for *homoiousios*, 'of the like substance.' Synod after synod discussed the difference. One Council, held at Sirmium thirty-five years after that of Nicæa, affirmed the *homoiousion* by a great majority. The whole world, it was said, was startled to find itself Arian. But the advocates of Scriptural truth held on their undaunted way, although Athanasius, the foremost champion of the Nicene doctrine, with Hilary of Poitiers, his chief coadjutor in the Western Churches, died before the final victory was won.

Very striking is the picture which Hilary gives of this stormy period :—

Since the Nicene Council, we have done nothing but write about the Creed. While we fight about words, in-

[1] Socrates, *Eccl. Hist.* i. c. 9, 'Letters of Constantine.'
[2] The word occurs in Origen.

quire about novelties, take advantage of ambiguities, criticise authors, fight on party questions, have difficulties in agreeing, and prepare to anathematise one another, there is scarcely a man who belongs to Christ. First we have a Creed which bids us not use the Nicene *homoousion;* then comes another which decrees and preaches it; next a third excuses the word *substance* as adopted by the Fathers in their simplicity; then a fourth which, instead of excusing, condemns. Every year, nay every month, we make new Creeds to describe inscrutable mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent, we anathematise those whom we defended. We condemn the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own doctrine in that of others; and reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin.[1]

So, in a well-known passage, the historian Gibbon sarcastically remarks upon 'the furious contests which the difference of a single diphthong excited between the Homoousians and the Homoiousians.'[2] Yes; the difference was only an *iota,* yet the interests involved were too vast for the sceptical historian to understand. There is a very noteworthy reference in Froude's *Life of Carlyle* to a conversation with the veteran sage, then in his eighty-third year:—'In earlier years Carlyle had spoken contemptuously of the Athan-

[1] 'Second Address to Constantine II.,' A.D. 360 (Migne, *Patrol.*, Hil. vol. ii. p. 567).

[2] *Decline and Fall,* ch. xxi.

asian controversy, of the Christian world torn to pieces over a diphthong; and he would ring the changes in broad Annandale on the Homœousion and the Homœiousion. But now,' adds Mr. Froude, 'he told me that he perceived Christianity itself to have been at stake. If the Arians had won, it would have dwindled away into a legend.'[1]

The struggle lasted for fifty-six years. It is no part of my purpose to speak of the great men, defenders of the faith, who arose during this period in the Eastern Churches—Basil of Cæsarea, the two Gregories, the two Cyrils, and Chrysostom; still less of the teachers of new and strange doctrines concerning the nature of Christ and the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit—Nestorius, Apollinarius, Eutyches, Macedonius. These all in their way kept the theological strife alive; and we hardly wonder that Julian, surnamed the Apostate, whose brief reign, with his abortive effort to revive Paganism, belonged to this half-century, should have issued an edict, at once recalling the bishops who had been exiled for their faith and commanding universal toleration. 'He

[1] *Thomas Carlyle: a History of his Life in London*, vol. ii. ch. xxxv. p. 462.

would invite,' we are told, 'the leaders and chief laity of different sects into his palace, and inform them with all suavity that they were at liberty to follow any form of belief they chose,' his hope perhaps being, as a Christian historian of the period suggests with more shrewdness than charity,[1] that if free license were given to every shade of opinion, the Christian people would be no longer dangerous from their unanimity. It is at least certain that unanimity was not secured.

It had become evident in the course of years that the Creed of the Nicæan Fathers needed some supplemental declaration. New questions had arisen, on which that Creed was silent. The belief in the Holy Ghost was left without any explanation. The doctrines regarding the Church, the Sacraments, the Future Life, were altogether omitted. Gregory of Nazianzum, next to Athanasius the greatest theologian of the period, writes in a letter to a friend: 'To that faith (as declared at Nicæa) we belong and will belong, even while we add some Articles, in explanation of that which was stated there concerning the Holy Spirit,

[1] Sozomen, *Eccl. Hist.* lib. v. c. 5. But the Pagan historian Ammianus hints the same motive (*Hist.* xxii. 5).

somewhat defectively, because the question had not then been stirred.'[1] Cyril of Jerusalem reaffirms the Creed with some added articles of his own;[2] and Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, an orthodox and very earnest man, although of narrow understanding, wrote a treatise which is of some importance in the history of Creeds. The treatise is entitled *Ancoratus*, 'the anchored one,' and is intended to set forth the fundamental truths of the Gospel. At its close it contains a copy, somewhat modified, of the Nicene Creed much as we have it now, with an important paragraph added after the expression of faith in the Holy Ghost, which paragraph concludes the Creed.[3] How Epiphanius came by this paragraph no one can tell. Did he compose it himself? Hardly likely, considering what manner of man he was. Did he derive it from Cyril, or Gregory, or from any other bishop, or from some Synod, amid the discussions of that distracted age? This last explanation seems on the whole the likelier; but in the lack of positive evidence we must leave the

[1] 'Letter to Cledonius, ii.' (Migne, *Patrol. Græc.* xxxvii. col. 178), Swainson, p. 84.

[2] *Catechetical Lectures*, xix. xx.

[3] See Appendix, Note 6, *Epiphanian Additions to the Nicene Creed.*

question undetermined. Nor does it matter much. Enough that the Creed with this addition was declared at a subsequent Council to be the voice of the Universal Church. At which Council is again uncertain. There was a Synod of one hundred and fifty bishops, declared œcumenical, held at Constantinople A.D. 381, about seven years after the publication of Epiphanius ; and the adoption of the complete Creed must probably be attributed to that assembly. The Creed is accordingly known as the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan. Many of the records of that Council have, however, perished, and all that is certain is that its First Canon decrees : 'The Confession of Faith of the three hundred and eighteen Fathers who were assembled at Nicæa in Bithynia shall not be abolished, but shall remain ; and every heresy shall be anathematised,' these heresies being then recounted.[1]

Thus far the Article mentions only the formula as it left the hands of the Nicæan Fathers, and we know that again and again in Synods of the

[1] See Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii. p. 53. The heresies are those of 'the Eunomians or Anomœans, the Arians or Eudoxians, the Semi-Arians or Pneumatomachians, the Sabellians, Marcellians, Photinians, and Apollinarians.'

Churches it had been declared that this 'Nicene Creed' should be held, unchanged and unaltered. To decide whether what we may call the Epiphanian additions were authoritatively recognised at Constantinople, we turn in the first instance to the acts of the next so-called œcumenical Council at Ephesus, A.D. 431, memorable for its dealings with the Nestorian doctrine, and its decree of the θεοτόκος, 'bearer of God,' as the title of the Virgin Mary. This Council, however, simply announced its adherence to the Nicæan symbol, without any reference at all to Constantinople. But at the next General Council, at Chalcedon, A.D. 451, the assembled bishops, between five and six hundred in number, accepted the Creed in its completed form, as 'from the three hundred and eighteen Fathers at Nicæa and the one hundred and fifty Fathers at Constantinople.' This Creed, in the main, agrees with that set forth by Epiphanius nearly eighty years before, omitting, however, the anathematising clauses, and is substantially the Nicene Creed as we all know it to-day. To meet the new forms of perverted doctrine respecting the person of Christ, a significant clause was inserted, not in the Creed itself,

but in a supplemental declaration by the Council. In this clause four expressive adverbs were employed, at the instance of Pope Leo I., whose genius dominated the assembly at Chalcedon. The words declared the doctrine of the Two Natures of our Lord as united, *ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως*—without confusion, without change, without division, without separation—words directed severally against the Sabellian, Eutychian, Apollinarian, and Nestorian theories. These words are landmarks in the history of thought, although the Creed itself was regarded as complete without them.

The fourfold form of error thus noted is no doubt natural to speculative minds. The late Sir William Hamilton of Dublin tells a story of his little boy, six or seven years old, who came to him one day to ask how it was that Christ Jesus could be both God and man, suggesting an explanation. The child's father told him it would not do, and sent him away to think out the matter again. The little fellow soon came with another theory, but was once more sent back in the same way. So again, and yet again; by which time, Sir William Hamilton says, 'my son had hit substan-

tially, in his childish way, upon the four chief heresies of the fourth and fifth centuries!'

Unlike the 'Apostles' Creed,' the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan formula was accepted by both East and West, with one important difference, turning again upon a single phrase. This phrase, added in the West, was the famous *Filioque*. In the original Greek form of the Creed, the Holy Spirit was set forth as 'proceeding from the Father'; the Western Churches, in a synod held in Toledo, A.D. 589, added 'and the Son'; and the doctrine of the 'Double Procession of the Holy Ghost' was one of the occasions of the great schism between Eastern and Western Churches which has lasted to our own time. It is hard for us to conceive the fervour—I may add, the rancour—with which this abstruse metaphysical point was debated. For, it must be borne in mind, the question was not of the Mission of the Comforter in the work of Redemption—called in theological language His Temporal Mission, His mission in the Economy of Grace. The point at issue was the mode of existence in the Triune Godhead: whether the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father alone—a view which was said to deny the identity of the

Father with the Son—or from the Father and the Son conjointly; against which opinion it was argued that there would then be in the Divine Essence two principles or originating powers. The discussion was at one time very real and earnest; but in the clearer light of modern philosophy it is seen to turn upon matters of which we know nothing. In the phrase of the day, either alternative is alike 'unthinkable,' and the whole controversy is an instructive example of those theological debates, so frequent in the past and possibly not unknown even now, which are interminable so long as the limit of our intellectual powers is unexamined, but which, when our ignorance is once acknowledged, are for ever laid to rest. There are many questions besides that of the Double Procession of the Holy Ghost, hotly debated in more recent times, of which we hear no word of controversy now, not because the problems are solved, but because they are seen to be insoluble.[1]

[1] It is only just to give a somewhat opposite view to the above, in the words of Charles Kingsley to F. D. Maurice in 1865: 'The procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son,' Mr. Kingsley writes, 'is most practically important to me. If the Spirit proceeds only from the Father, the whole theorem of the Trinity, as well as its practical results, falls to pieces in my mind. I do not mean that good

III

When we come to the third great Creed of the Ancient Church, that which wrongly bears the appellation ATHANASIAN, otherwise termed, from its metrical form and its first word, 'The Hymn *Quicunque*,' we are met by an altogether different class of facts. Instead of being gradually evolved, like the Apostles' Creed, from the thought and conviction of the Church through successive generations, or of being discussed and settled, like the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed, at œcumenical councils, this so-called Athanasian Creed emerges no one can tell whence or how, and is found mysteriously incorporated in the Liturgies of the Churches without any hint as to the source of its authority. That this Latin document was not the work of the Greek father Athanasius is abundantly evident. No Greek original of it was even pretended to exist, and almost every fresh investigation of the evidence leads to some new

men in the Greek Church are not better than I. On the contrary, I believe that every good man therein believes in the procession from both Father and Son, whether he thinks he does so or not.'

The writer of these words probably had in his mind the 'Temporal Mission' of the Comforter rather than the mode of His Being. If so, his language is quite consistent with what has been said above.

theory as to its authorship. What is certain is that it was still directed against the different theories as to the Person of Christ maintained during the ages of controversy which followed the Nicæan Council, and that its origin was in the Western Church, probably in its African or its Gallic portion. The date has been very variously assigned. On the one hand, it is plainly later than Augustine, who died A.D. 430; as it contains obvious quotations from that Father's works; and it is as plainly earlier than a synod at Augustodunum[1] in France, A.D. 670, by which the acknowledgment of the Creed was enjoined upon the clergy.[2] Again, the substance of it, though not in the form of direct quotation, is found in the Acts of three Spanish synods (Toledo, A.D. 589, 633, 638), from which it appears probable that the document itself already existed in the sixth century. Higher than this we cannot go. It is more than likely that the Creed, or Psalm, as it has been called, came from some monastery of the

[1] Otherwise Bibracte, now *Autun*.

[2] Another note of its date is in the fact that it contains no reference to the Monothelite controversy, defined at the Sixth General Council (Constantinople III.). Had the Creed been later it could scarcely have missed this point.

West, and was gradually accepted on its own merits, without reference to its authorship. We note its use in Divine service in the ninth century at Basle ; in the tenth century in England. At first it was chanted before the Apostles' Creed, as a kind of introduction to that succinct formulary ; we all know the place it now holds in the Anglican Prayer Book ; its use being enjoined on just thirteen days of the year, including the great Church festivals. Its use is discontinued in the Episcopal Church of the United States, and is made optional in the disestablished Church of Ireland.

The discussions that have arisen in our own times regarding this formulary are interesting even to those not immediately concerned in them, in the light that they shed upon religious thought both past and present. One thing may be conceded to the defenders of the Creed. It does not, as often contended, attempt to give an *explanation* of the Divine mysteries which it asserts. It is a series of declarations, with little or no attempt at metaphysical analysis. The formula meets those who endeavoured to explain the Divine mode of existence, not by counter-explanation

but by reiterated dogmatic forms of definition. On this point Mr. Balfour cogently remarks, in his *Foundations of Belief.*

> The Church held that all such partial explanations inflicted irremediable impoverishment on the idea of the Godhead which was essentially involved in the Christian revelation. They insisted on preserving that idea in all its inexplicable fulness; and so it has come about that while such simplifications as those of the Arians, for example, are so alien and impossible to modern modes of thought that, if they had been incorporated with Christianity, they must have destroyed it, the doctrine of Christ's divinity still gives life and reality to the worship of millions of pious souls, who are wholly ignorant both of the controversy to which they owe its preservation and of the technicalities which its discussion has involved.

Like the Nicene Creed, the Hymn *Quicunque* throws the main stress on the doctrine of the Godhead; and especially on the Divine nature of the Son; the clauses concerning Redemption being brief and condensed. The words *Trinity* and *Person* now first occur in articles of belief. 'Trinity,' found in Tertullian,[1] was a convenient phrase, avowedly non-biblical, in which to sum up the biblical teaching. 'Person,' altogether a more equivocal term, and the source of endless confusion

[1] *Adv. Praxean*, c. ii. iii. (Clark's ed. vol. ii. pp. 337 *sq.*).

of thought, was taken as the equivalent of the Greek ὑπόστασις. Yet, properly speaking, 'hypostasis' means substance, or subsistence; and 'persona' or πρόσωπον denotes the character under which a being appears. Thus, in place of interpreting the mystery, the theologians of the period effected a compromise; decreeing that *person* in Latin and *substance* in Greek should represent the same ineffable reality; whereas for a Greek to say 'person' in his own language, or for a Latin to say *substantia*, would be heresy.

The English translation of the *Quicunque*, made in 1552, has some obvious errors; and among the subjects mooted at the Lambeth Pan-Anglican Conference of 1897 was the advisableness of preparing a new version for the English-speaking Churches. The present version begins ambiguously: 'Before all things it is necessary to hold the Catholic faith.' The meaning of *ante omnia* is not before all things in *importance*, but first of all in point of *time*. Then, in the clause 'The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, the Holy Ghost incomprehensible,' the word *immensus* should plainly be rendered 'unmeasured' or 'infinite.'

But the chief ground for proposing revision is in the uncompromising character of the clauses which assert the everlasting condemnation of those who do not hold the Catholic faith as therein defined. Some modification of these clauses undoubtedly would at once be closer to the original and less offensive to Christian charity.

Such amendments, however, would be but palliative; and although the language may be softened by re-translation, the main anathema remains. The composers of the *Quicunque* meant it so, and, in fact, did but repeat in a more explicit way the anathemas of earlier Creeds. When we argue that the doom pronounced is too terrible to be literally believed in, we are but importing the spirit of the nineteenth century into the sixth or seventh. The theologians of those early days would have scorned your compromises. To deny, for instance, the Double Procession of the Holy Ghost, as asserted again in this formula, would be to deserve hell-fire. Such, all the world over, is the spirit of intolerant ecclesiasticism.

It is fair to add that, within the English Church, the protests have not been few. Thus

Bishop Jeremy Taylor writes: 'It seems very hard to put uncharitableness into a Creed, and so to make it become an article of Faith.' Archbishop Tillotson wrote to Bishop Burnet: 'The account given by you (in Burnet's *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*) of Athanasius's Creed seems to me nowise satisfactory: I wish we were well rid of it.' And Bishop Hoadly says: 'I confess that I cannot apprehend how the public service could suffer, were there no such damnatory sentence ever read in it. Nay, I am of opinion that the doctrine of the Trinity would be better secured, and this very account of it better received, without such sentences than with them.'

Recent discussions have brought the subject more clearly into light. A Royal Commission, appointed in 1867, pronounced by a vote of nineteen out of twenty-seven members, against the compulsory public use of the Creed; their recommendation, however, was never carried out. In 1873 the Convocation of Canterbury, after long and anxious debate, adopted two resolutions which, it was hoped, would ease the minds of thousands of the clergy who had sought relief:[1]—

[1] See history in Swainson, *On the Creeds*, pp. 523-526.

1. That the confession of our Christian Faith, commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius, doth not make any addition to the Faith as contained in Holy Scripture, but warneth against errors which from time to time have existed in the Church of Christ.

2. That inasmuch as Holy Scripture in divers places doth promise life to them that believe, and declare the condemnation of them that believe not, so doth the Church in this Confession declare the necessity for all who would be in a state of salvation of holding fast the Catholic faith, and the great peril of rejecting the same. Wherefore the warnings in this Confession of Faith are to be understood no otherwise than the like warnings in Holy Scripture; for we must receive God's threatenings even as His promises, in such wise as they are generally set forth in Holy Writ. Moreover, the Church doth not herein pronounce judgment on any . . . particular person or persons, God alone being the Judge of all.

This declaration, moderate and guarded as its language seems, was rejected by the Convocation of York; and the attempt to do anything more than simply to re-translate the *Quicunque* is probably now abandoned as hopeless.

No doubt the balance of opinion in the Church of England remains in favour of the Creed. Dr. Waterland expresses the general view: 'The use of it will hardly be thought superfluous so long as there are any Arians, Photinians, Sabellians,

Macedonians, Apollinarians, Nestorians, or Eutychians in these parts.' And to the same effect, in the course of the more recent discussions, Dr. Pusey wrote to Bishop Wilberforce:[1] 'I believe that the Athanasian Creed is the only safeguard against our clergy and people falling into Nestorianism and Eutychianism, some into one, some into the other.' 'The only safeguard'! I cannot help pausing to ask, into which of these heresies *we* are likely to fall, who have no Athanasian Creed in our formularies to keep us right!

No doubt there are theologians of a more liberal school who concur in the fears expressed by Waterland and Pusey. Thus, while Dean Stanley, as is well known, was strongly opposed to the continued use of the Athanasian formula, his friends Charles Kingsley and F. D. Maurice were equally strenuous upholders of it;[2] the latter expressing, according to his wont, his deep thankfulness for such a guide. And Dr. Arnold of Rugby wrote to an old pupil:[3] 'I do not believe the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed,

[1] 19th October 1871: *Life of Pusey*, vol. iv.

[2] See Maurice's *Essays*, note at the end; also his pamphlet, 'Subscription no Bondage.'

[3] 22nd June 1858: Stanley's *Life of Arnold*, vol. ii. p. 125.

under any qualification given of them, except such as substitute for them propositions of a wholly different character. . . . But I read the Athanasian Creed, and have subscribed, and should again subscribe, the Article about it, because I do not conceive the clauses in question to be essential parts of it, or that they were retained deliberately by our Reformers, after the propriety of retaining or expunging them had been distinctly submitted to their minds.'

Do not think that all this belongs to the inner affairs of the Church of England, without application to ourselves. It does bear, most clearly and significantly, upon the questions that we shall have to discuss in a subsequent Lecture, regarding Subscription to Creeds and Confessions. Meanwhile, we have to pass from the Creeds of the early Church to the Mediæval and Reformation period, where we shall meet with an entirely different class of phenomena, and shall trace together the operation of those intellectual movements and spiritual forces from which the Church life of modern days has sprung, with its supreme rule of faith and doctrine in the 'living Oracles,' the written Word of God.

LECTURE III

CONFESSIONS OF THE REFORMATION PERIOD

THE Creeds of the early Church, as considered in the preceding Lecture, will have been seen to agree in this one marked particular, that they relate chiefly to the being and nature of God in His Triune revelation. Especially do they concentrate attention upon the Lord Jesus Christ, His Deity and Sonship, His Incarnation, sufferings, and glory. The question of questions for the time was, Who and What was He? On this there was full expansion. The further question, What has He done for man? was answered, in the Nicene Creed, by the unexplained statement of a single clause, 'For us men and for our salvation,' and in the *Quicunque* by the phrase, 'Who suffered for our salvation,'—declarations left in their bare simplicity to the interpretation of Chris-

tian consciousness and faith, with no details on the important connected topics of Sin and Atonement, the Mediatorial work of Christ, Justification through Faith, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. It can hardly have been that these topics were omitted as of subordinate importance: the probable explanation is that they were as yet comparatively undisputed, or rather that they lay implicitly in the Christian consciousness, accepted without analysis. Yet it is not a little remarkable that the Pelagian controversy respecting Divine grace and human freedom should have left no traces at least upon the latest of these Creeds. The inference is that these declarations of 'the Catholic faith' were intentionally devoted to one phase of the truth, passing by the whole range of subjective theology as beyond their scope. Thus, technically speaking, in modern phrase, the three Creeds contain a Theology proper, and a Christology; but not an Anthropology or a Soteriology. Nor is this fact wholly a disadvantage. Looking at some ancient speculations respecting Atonement and Redemption, one trembles to think what the result might have been had these become stamped with the authority of ecclesiastical dogma

and inculcated as a necessary part of Catholic belief.

The ages that followed were marked by constant discussions on these and kindred themes—at least in the Western Church. The unprogressive East held fast by the Nicene Creed, with little or no doctrinal development; but the West, which gradually became the realm of the Papacy, witnessed much activity of thought, especially during the long scholastic period, when the doctors of the schools, with great subtlety and immense industry, employed all the resources of the Aristotelian dialectic in the attempt to build up Theology upon a basis of philosophy, with admixtures of mysticism, and further speculations into which it is no part of my present purpose to inquire. Tradition and Church authority were made coordinate with Scripture as guides of religious belief; nay, they became practically supreme, as an authentically inspired living voice must be superior to the written page. Christianity in outward form was increasingly a sacramental system: to the masses it was little more. Salvation was to be obtained through the baptismal waters, the out-

ward rite determining the limits of the Holy Catholic Church; and the mystery of Incarnation, rightly represented as the secret of all true spiritual life, was to be realised only through the Eucharist. Thought, will, and conscience were held under the sway of a ubiquitous and all-dominating priesthood.

During this period certain beliefs, long debated, by degrees assumed shape, and were formulated into dogmas. We shall meet with them again in the Roman Creed of 1564, known as the Creed of Pope Pius IV. Suffice it now to say, that the most important of these were the dogma of Transubstantiation, affirmed as an Article of Faith at the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, and that of Purgatory, laid down as a *credendum* at the Council of Florence, 1439. Other tenets there were, as those relating to the adoration of images, the invocation of saints, the imputation of their merits, the number and efficacy of the Sacraments, and the like, asserted in Papal Bulls or at successive Councils, and afterwards finding a place in the same memorable Creed.

But meanwhile there were movements of thought towards higher religious ideals; partly

on scholastic lines, by men who strove to interpret the Scriptures according to a profounder and more spiritual philosophy; and partly in the healthy reactions of common-sense against the superstitions imposed upon the multitude. Some of these protests were denounced as 'heresies,' and the reports of them have come down to us with that stigma attached to them. It is always important to remember that it is the dominant party that tells the tale. It has been too much the way with ecclesiastics to give the doctrine an evil name, as an easier process than refuting it; and many a reputed heretic has been cast out of the pale of the professedly Catholic Church only because his faith was more spiritual and scriptural than that of his triumphant opponents. We need, therefore, much discrimination to judge aright amid the perversions and suppressions of historical truth that have reached us. We know, for instance, that the Albigenses, and the earlier so-called Anabaptists, have been greatly slandered; so perhaps has it been in more ancient times than theirs, from the days of Vigilantius downwards. The might in Church matters is not always with the right.

But we are on yet firmer ground when we come to those precursors of the Reformation whose works remain to speak for themselves. Thus Anselm, the great scholastic divine, Archbishop of Canterbury in the eleventh century, in his *Cur Deus Homo?* met the crude theories of the Atonement which had prevailed up to his day by a doctrine based (whether we can now wholly accept it or not) upon the character of God and the needs of man. But undoubtedly the chief battle-ground between the dogmatic theology of the period and the dawning liberalism of independent minds was the Eucharist, the discussion of which was largely philosophical, conducted in hard scholastic fashion, with much subtle distinction between *corpus* and *species*, 'substance' and 'accident.' Thus Berengarius of Tours, in the eleventh century, endeavoured to interpret the Real Presence in a spiritual sense; and although silenced and condemned, he had his followers in succeeding generations, among them notably our own Wyclif and the Bohemian John Hus. These men represent the philosophical aspect of the question; while in the minds of simpler people there was a growingly indignant sense of Church

abuses, with a revolt against priestly tyranny, that heralded the mighty struggles of a future generation.

The general course of religious thought, however, concerns us now only so far as it was led to embody itself in Creed and Confession. For this the time was hardly ripe until the Reformation period of the sixteenth century. Then the hour had come, and the man for the crisis was Martin Luther. The first decisive act that heralded the Reformation, as all the world knows, was the posting of Luther's Ninety-five Theses upon the door of the church at Wittenberg in 1517. It must be noted that these formed neither a Creed nor a Theological Confession. For that the time had not yet arrived. The one duty of the hour was to protest against the traffic in Indulgences. Yet this protest, in principle, whether the Reformers clearly discerned it or not, involved that doctrine regarding Sin, on the apprehension of which all true Soteriology must rest. True repentance must be of the heart, and the only valid forgiveness is from God. These principles Luther clearly affirms, yet he scarcely saw at first whither the

affirmation would lead. For, if carried to their logical, scriptural conclusion, they call the soul away from Pope and Priest to Christ Himself. This Luther soon discovered, and events moved rapidly. 'The Reformation,' it has been truly said, 'was born of the conviction of Sin.'

The Theses had appeared in 1517; the Diet of Worms, where Luther made his memorable stand on behalf of the Bible and Conscience, was in 1521; the era of Confessions may be said to have begun in 1529, when Luther prepared his Catechisms: the Longer, a theological treatise which need not concern us now; and the Smaller, a succinct, and even beautiful, manual for children and the unlettered. It contains the Ten Commandments, arranged after the Roman fashion, uniting the first two, and dividing the tenth; with the 'Apostles' Creed,' the Lord's Prayer, and a section on Baptism and the Lord's Supper—the whole accompanied with succinct explanations, which prove Luther, beyond almost all men, to possess the priceless gift of being able to express the thoughts of the wise in the words of the simple.

In the course of the immediately following

years there were influences actively at work, which not only determined the course of the Reformation, but eventually led to much doctrinal divergence among Protestants. Chief among these influences were the teachings and labours of Ulrich Zwingli in Switzerland. At a very early period Zwingli had been attracted by Luther's teachings; but he was led by independent study of the Scriptures to different conclusions on some important points. At a great religious conference at Zurich in 1523, the Swiss Reformer had propounded sixty-seven Theses, or, as he termed them, Conclusions, which, like the Theses of Luther at Wittenberg six years previously, rather opened the way for further discussion than attempted any complete syllabus of doctrine. They went, however, considerably farther than Luther in their divergence from traditional belief, and were the herald of a greater Reformation than his. In Luther's Theses the chief topics were sin, repentance, and forgiveness; Zwingli's Conclusions are 'full of Christ as the only Saviour and Mediator, and recognise the Scriptures as the only rule of faith.' 'The Sum of the Gospel,' the Swiss Reformer declares, 'is that our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Son of God,

has made known to us the will of His heavenly Father, and redeemed us by His innocence from eternal death, and reconciled us to God.' And again, 'Christ is the Head of all believers.' 'All who live in this Head are His members, and children of God. And this is the true Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints.' Once more, 'Christ, who offered Himself once upon the Cross, is the sufficient and perpetual Sacrifice for the sins of all believers. Therefore the Mass is no sacrifice, but a commemoration of the one Sacrifice of the Cross, and a seal of the redemption through Christ.' In this last Article, especially, Zwingli definitely broke with the teaching of Luther, who, to the last, maintained a real presence of our Lord's Body and Blood in the Eucharist, although in a different way than that maintained by Romish theologians. But the Swiss Reformer gained enthusiastic adherents, especially Œcolampadius and Martin Bucer, who maintained the same positions in the *Ten Articles of Berne*, prepared after an animated discussion with the representative of the Papacy, Dr. Martin Eck. The promulgation of these views, it must be confessed, alarmed and grieved the German reformers even

more than they irritated the Romanists. Melanchthon himself, with all his large-heartedness, could not understand Zwingli; and he especially feared that the opinions of the Swiss Reformer on the Sacraments would hopelessly injure the Protestant cause.

Once only during their career did Luther and Zwingli meet face to face. This was at Marburg, in Cassel, fifty miles north of Frankfurt, in 1529, the year of the Catechisms. Luther was accompanied by Melanchthon, Zwingli by Œcolampadius. Long was the conference, conducted at first in private and by pairs, Zwingli being matched with Melanchthon, Œcolampadius with Luther. It was feared, perhaps, that if the two principals confronted each other, their strong wills and fiery tempers might lead to some disastrous issue. A more general conference ensued after the ground had been thus broken; and the points at issue were debated before a great assembly. As might have been expected, the disputants remained of the same opinion still. In the preliminary debate Luther had chalked in large letters, on the table where he and his antagonist sat, *Hoc est corpus meum*, 'This is My body,' putting his finger

down emphatically on the word *est;* and from his literal interpretation of the saying he could not be moved. Melanchthon thought that Zwingli must be out of his mind! After the general discussion Zwingli offered Luther his hand; I am sorry to say that Luther refused it. 'No,' he said, 'you have another spirit.' Afterwards, however, he seems to have relented, and the upshot of the conference was the drafting of fourteen articles[1] on which the combatants could agree—the fifteenth being left undetermined;[2] thus—

XV. (1) That the Eucharist should be received in both kinds.

(2) That the sacrifice of the Mass is inadmissible.

(3) That the Sacrament of the Altar is a sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, and that the partaking of it is salutary.

[1] 1. The Trinity; 2. Incarnation of Christ; 3. Birth, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ; 4. Original Sin (but with a difference between the two Reformers); 5. Redemption; 6, 7. Justification by Faith; 8. Operation of the Holy Ghost through the written Word and the Sacraments; 9. Baptism; 10. Good works as the fruit of Faith; 11. Confession and Absolution; 12. Civil Authority; 13. Tradition; 14. Necessity of Infant Baptism.

[2] See Hagenbach, *History of the Reformation* (Clark's ed.), vol. ii. p. 107.

'And although,' it was further stated, 'we are not at this time agreed as to whether the true Body and Blood of Christ are physically present in the Bread and Wine, we recommend that either party manifest a Christian love to the other, to the extent that the conscience of every man shall permit, and that both parties entreat God Almighty to confirm us by His Spirit in the right doctrine. Amen.' It is pleasant to think that Luther and Zwingli parted thus. There was a Christian magnanimity in this concord of those two strong souls which may commend the example to controversialists everywhere, and which at the time augured well for the progress and success of the Reformation.

In the meantime, preparations were in active progress for the solemn consideration of the points at issue between the Reformers and the Romanists, at a specially convened Diet or Assembly of the States of the German Empire. The Emperor Charles V. had been crowned by the Pope in September, and now made it his first business to convoke this diet, in the Bavarian city of Augsburg, for two purposes. First, to deliberate concerning the Turkish power, the incursions of which

in Europe were at this time exciting alarm ; and secondly—to quote the language of the Address to the Emperor by which the Confession is prefaced—'because of dissensions in the matter of our holy religion and Christian faith ; and in order that in this matter of religion the opinions and judgments of diverse parties may be heard in each others' presence, may be understood and weighed among one another, in mutual charity, meekness, and gentleness ; that—those things which in the writings on either side have been handled or understood amiss being laid aside and corrected—these things may be harmonised and brought back to the one simple truth and Christian concord ; so that hereafter the one unfeigned and true religion may be embraced and preserved by us, so that, as we are subjects and soldiers of the one Christ, so also, in unity and concord, we may live in the one Christian Church.'[1]

This promised well. The Lutheran leaders, with the princes of the State that had espoused their cause, were ready to respond in the same spirit ; and Melanchthon, in the absence of Luther, who remained at Coburg (as near, probably, as he

[1] Schaff, *The Creeds of the Evangelical Protestant Churches*, pp. 3, 4.

could safely venture), was commissioned to prepare a Confession. Luther in his retreat was eagerly interested, for none better than he knew what interests were at stake. The words of his famous version of the forty-sixth Psalm, '*Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*,' expressive of his own faith and resolution, were often upon his lips. To the Elector John of Saxony, leader of the Protestant princes, he wrote—'I have read the Apology of Master Philip; it pleases me very well, and I know of nothing by which I could change it for the better; nor would it be becoming, for I cannot move so softly and gently. May Christ our Lord help, that it may bring forth much and bear fruit, as we hope it may. Amen.'

The Zwinglians had also prepared Confessions in explanation of their special views.[1] One was the *Confessio Tetrapolitana*, the Confession of four cities—Strasburg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau—mainly written by Bucer; the other was prepared by Zwingli himself, who was absent from the Diet, and was sent by him to the Emperor. Neither of these documents, however, was permitted to be publicly brought forward: the

[1] Hagenbach, *History of the Reformation*, vol. ii. 125.

Lutherans had the field to themselves. Perhaps it was as well that the rivalry of Creeds between the two sections of Protestants should not be made prominent on such an occasion.

Thus was the celebrated Confession of Augsburg, otherwise known as the Augustan Confession (*Confessio Augustana*), introduced to the magnates and theologians of the German Empire; and I do not think that in all the history of the Church since apostolic times there has been a more memorable day than the 25th of June 1530. The annalists of the period have given a full description of the scene, with many graphic details. The Confession, called by Melanchthon an Apology, had been prepared on the basis of an earlier and briefer statement by Luther, dated from Thorgau in Saxony. The Reformation leaders had proposed that it should be signed by theologians and ministers. But the Protestant princes had otherwise determined. In their esteem, the question was not for the clergy alone, but for the whole body of Christian people. Councils of ecclesiastics had hitherto claimed to guide the faith of the multitude; now let the royal priesthood of the laity be asserted. This also was a new departure,

as characteristic of the Reformation as anything in the contents of the Confession. But the point was not yielded without difficulties on the part of Melanchthon. In discussing the question with John of Saxony, leader of the Protestant princes, the cautious Reformer urged that the Elector's prominence in the matter might endanger his crown. But John replied: 'God forbid that you should exclude me! I am resolved to do what is right without troubling myself about my crown. I desire to confess the Lord.'

The other princes followed suit; and so it came to pass that this Confession of Luther and Melanchthon, henceforth to be the accepted standard of the Evangelical Church of Germany, was delivered to the Emperor, not by the body of Protestant divines, but by the secular authorities. Seven princes signed it on behalf of their States, and it was signed also by the representatives of two free cities. On such a phase of the question as between Church and State we might on another occasion have some criticisms to offer, in consideration of the altered times in which we live; but, at any rate, it suited the circumstances of the hour, and stands as an instructive incident in the

changeful history of the relations between ecclesiastical hierarchies and Christian peoples.

Another circumstance is equally significant. Almost as a matter of course, the Emperor expected the Confession to be written and read in Latin, the tongue of the clerics and the learned. 'Not so,' the signatories respectfully urged. 'We are on German soil,' added the Elector of Saxony, 'therefore I hope your Majesty will permit the German language to be used.' At length the Emperor reluctantly gave consent.

The scene was imposing. Charles the Fifth occupied his chair of state in the chapel of the episcopal palace, a larger place of audience having been refused. The Electors of the Empire, Protestant and Papist, sat on either side; the building, which held but two hundred persons, was crowded by the officials of the several courts; while the open door was beset by an eager throng, anxious to catch if but a few words of the great manifesto. The Confession, we are expressly told, was read by the Vice-Chancellor of the Saxon Electorate, Dr. Christian Bayer, in loud, clear tones, so that those assembled outside the door could hear. The reading occupied two hours; in the

midst of it the Emperor fell fast asleep; but at the close he woke up, and hastily appointed, by advice of the Diet, a Committee of Romish theologians to prepare a reply. The answer, when it came, mainly written by Dr. Eck, Luther's indefatigable opponent, was deemed by the Emperor and his advisers a sufficient refutation. Not so, however (naturally), by Melanchthon, who wrote to Luther that of all the wretched productions of their antagonists this Confutation was the most miserable! Another conference followed in August, but nothing came of it. The Emperor intimated his displeasure that a minority should introduce 'a strange doctrine, adverse to the faith of the world. The minority,' he naïvely intimated, 'ought to follow the lead of the majority.' It was the best argument, probably, that his Imperial Majesty could employ. The Protestants, however, were not abashed; and Melanchthon proceeded to write an elaborate Defence of the Confession, presenting it to the Emperor, who, however, refused to accept it. This Defence, or *Apology*, as it is generally called, admirably written, is now, in a somewhat altered form, among the recognised standards of the Lutheran Church, as are also the

Articles of Schmalkald, in Thuringia, prepared by Luther himself seven years later, to be submitted to a General Council proposed to be held at Mantua, with a last faint hope of reconciliation between the Reformation and the Papacy.

For it must be borne in mind, however strange the fact may seem to us, that there was, through all these stirring transactions, a real desire for some way of concord between the Reformed beliefs and the ancient Church. Even Melanchthon wrote, in subscribing Luther's Schmalkald Articles: 'In regard to the Pope, I hold that, if he would admit the Gospel, we might also permit him, for the sake of peace and the common concord of Christendom, to exercise by human right his present jurisdiction over the bishops who are now or may hereafter be under his authority.'

Strictly speaking, these documents of the Lutherans were rather Confessions than Creeds. The difference, as originally understood, was this:— The Creed was for the Church Universal; those who rejected it were heretics, altogether without the pale; the Confession was the voice of a special community, pleading with their fellow-Christians,

and propounding articles for common acceptance and mutual agreement. The Creeds, again, were partly for liturgical use; the Confessions were theological manifestoes, intended for instruction and defence rather than for worship. Hence the great length of many of these documents, as compared with the Three Creeds of the ancient churches. Not until the hope had been abandoned of securing that agreement, did the Confessions become authoritative standards of Faith, thus rendering the separation final and complete.

The Augsburg Confession, with the documents that followed it, contains, it is true, so emphatic a repudiation of Romanism, as now understood, as to excite some wonder that its articles could have ever been propounded as articles of peace. But we must remember that the Council of Trent had not yet been held, nor the Creed of Pius the Fourth promulgated. There was, or seemed to be, some room for discussion of questions and principles which now have been closed for more than three centuries; and although we, in looking back, can see clearly enough that the Reformation and the Papacy were irreconcilable, we may understand how both parties may have met at Augsburg with

a sanguine expectation which in these days would be the most baseless of dreams. Bearing this in mind, we may glance at the more important parts of Melanchthon's memorable Confession.[1]

In the twenty-two articles of which its doctrinal part consists, it first of all affirms the Nicene doctrine concerning the Godhead; entering then into the greatest questions of Anthropology, Redemption, and the Sacraments. In the strongest terms it affirms Original Sin, and declares Salvation to be through the Sacrifice of Christ alone. It is explicit on the doctrine of Justification, although without stating any forensic theory. 'Men are justified freely for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favour and their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death hath satisfied for our sins. This faith doth God impute for righteousness before Him.' Such is the statement of the doctrine which Luther declared to be the Article of a standing or a falling Church. In the Apology for the Confession, it should be added, the forensic theory does appear. The Confession maintains that faith must of necessity result in good works,

[1] See the Confession in detail, Appendix, Note 8.

and carefully draws the distinction between the meritorious cause and the effects of justification. It makes no mention of predestination, but declares the impotence of the human will without the Holy Spirit to work out spiritual obedience or things pleasing to God. In the strongest language it affirms the everlasting happiness of the saved and the eternal misery of the lost. The Church it defines (without using the word Catholic) as 'a Congregation (or, the Congregation) of all believers, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered.' Baptism it declares to be necessary to salvation; and, as a corollary, it affirms that infants ought to be baptized. In the Lord's Supper the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine. At the same time, the Sacraments are not efficacious *ex opere operato*, but only according to the faith of the recipient. How, under such conditions, the efficacy of Baptism extends to infants, the Confession does not explain.

A second part of the document relates chiefly to those practices in which the Lutherans regarded the Roman Church as having departed from primitive usage; for instance, the denial of the

cup in the Lord's Supper to the laity, the injunction of celibacy upon the clergy, the abuses of the mass, auricular confession, and absolution; traditional observances, monastic vows, and ecclesiastical authority.

Meanwhile the Swiss Reformers, denied a hearing at Augsburg, were actively inculcating their yet wider and more spiritual belief. Zwingli was pre-eminently a man in advance of his age. Without reserve he held the absolute and exclusive authority of Scripture in Christian faith and practice, rejecting Church tradition far more decidedly than Luther and Melanchthon had done. To him the Sacraments were but symbols and seals of spiritual gifts, which might, however, be imparted without them. Thus baptism might be without true regeneration, and there might be true regeneration without Baptism. Infant baptism he approved; but unbaptized infants dying would be saved. The belief, in which the Romish Church had followed the teaching of Augustine, that such infants would be excluded from heaven, he utterly repudiated, reconciling their certain salvation with his doctrine of Election, on the

ground that such infants also were among the elect. To the elect the upright among the heathen likewise belonged, as he for the first time boldly declared; and 'the fate of Socrates and Seneca,' he said, 'is no doubt better than that of many Popes.' In the Lord's Supper there was no communication of our Lord's body in any physical or literal sense. Bread and wine remained bread and wine; the Transubstantiation of Rome and the Consubstantiation of Luther were equally denied. The Eucharist, therefore, was a simple festival of commemoration. Such views, alarming to the Lutherans, and scorned by the Papists, were the precursors of all that is most spiritual in the Creeds of modern times; and when Zwingli passed away, slain in battle (1531), at the early age of forty-seven, he had initiated a Reformation of which perhaps the end is not even yet. His greater successor was John Calvin, a young man of twenty-two when Zwingli fell; a year later he espoused the cause of the Reformed faith, to which his career henceforth belongs.

The two divisions of the Protestant community were now known by different names, the Lutherans,

or adherents of the Augsburg Confession, being termed the Evangelical Church, the Zwinglians, the Reformed. These latter, for a time, had no Confession corresponding to that of Augsburg, although the *Conclusions of Berne* in 1528, and the *Confession of the Four Cities*, with Zwingli's letter to the Emperor, have already been mentioned. At Basle also, in the year following the Augsburg Diet, a brief Confession was prepared by Œcolampadius and afterwards published by his successor Myconius, also a friend of Zwingli, in which his doctrines are reaffirmed, with the very noteworthy addition, not always found in dogmatic Creeds: 'We submit this our Confession to the judgment of the Holy Scriptures, and hold ourselves ready always thankfully to obey God and His Word, if we should be corrected out of the said Holy Scriptures.' This Confession, however, like that of Berne in 1528, was chiefly local in its use; and it was not until 1536, five years after Zwingli's death, that the first great Confession of the whole Reformed Church was issued from Basle. In that year also Calvin's famous work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, in substance a Commentary on the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds,

was published, the author being but twenty-seven years of age. In the Confession itself (*Confessio Helvetica Prior*) he probably had no hand, it having been prepared by Bullinger, Myconius, and other disciples of Zwingli. It reiterates his well-known doctrines, but lays greater emphasis than he had done upon the value of the Sacraments. Unexpectedly this Confession gained the approval of Luther, and it seemed for a time as if the Evangelical and Reformed branches were to become united. But this was not to be. The most distinctive feature of this Confession, and of its more elaborate successor, the *Second Helvetic Formula*, issued from Zurich thirty years later, was the prominence given to Holy Scripture. The Augsburg Confession had stated in its preface that it is drawn from the Scriptures and the pure Word of God, but makes no further mention of the Bible. In the Swiss Confessions, on the other hand, we find the Bible in the foreground. The first five articles out of the twenty-eight in the former are devoted to the assertion of the authority of Scripture, with the repudiation of all human tradition. The second Article affirms that 'these Scriptures, holy and divine, are not to be inter-

preted and expounded otherwise than from themselves through the rule (literally, plumbline) of faith and love.'

In the same year, 1536, Calvin prepared a Catechism, based upon his *Institutes*, under the title of *The Catechism of the Church of Geneva*, and containing a short Confession of Faith, which was to be binding upon all the citizens. For a time this Catechism, first written in French, and afterwards translated into several other languages, had very considerable currency. It was, however, never formally adopted by the Reformed Churches as a symbol of their faith, being superseded, as we shall see, by others; although in Scotland the *First Book of Discipline*, 1560, directs it to be taught to children as 'the most perfect that ever yet was used in the Kirk.' The first answers of this Catechism are interesting, as a suggestion of what we afterwards find in that of the Westminster Assembly.

'What,' asks Calvin, 'is the chief end of human life?'

'That men may know God, by whom they were created.'

'For what reason dost thou say this?'

'Because He created and placed us in this world that He might be glorified in us. And truly it is right that our life, of which He is the beginning, should be dedicated to His glory.'

'Then what is the highest good of man?'

'That very thing.'

The spirit of Calvinism is here. All for God; too much forgetting, however, that He is not only Will and Power, but also Love.

In the end the use of Calvin's manual was superseded by the *Heidelberg Catechism* of 1563. This Catechism, prepared by direction of the Elector Palatine Frederick III., became at once a standard of doctrine and a guide to religious thought in the Reformed congregations of Germany and Switzerland. No book, perhaps, except the Bible, the *Imitatio Christi*, and the *Pilgrim's Progress*, has been so frequently translated and so largely used. Its clearness of arrangement and transparency of style, though with some rhetorical diffuseness, together with the moderation and devoutness of its tone, have commended it alike to professed theologians and the common people. Its authors were two young men, Bär and Olewig, latinised after the fashion of the time into Ursinus

and Olevianus. The former was the more scholarly of the two; he had been a pupil of Melanchthon at Wittenberg, and was a friend of Calvin and Beza. To these young divines belongs the honour of having prepared what, more than any other document, has been from the time of its publication the charter of the German Reformed Church. Characteristically, it begins on a different keynote from that of Calvin's Catechism. The older reformer had asked almost sternly, 'What is the chief end of human life?' The theologians of Heidelberg begin with the question, 'What is thy only comfort in life and in death?'—the answer being, 'That I, with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who with His precious blood has made full satisfaction for all my sins, and redeemed me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must work together for my salvation. Wherefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready henceforth to live unto Him.' Then follow three

divisions: first of Man's Sin and Misery; then of Man's Redemption, including the revelation of Father, Son, and Spirit, the work of Christ, and the Sacraments; and, lastly, of Thankfulness, under which head, it is interesting to note, is included whatever belongs to the practical Christian life; all obedience, devotion, and holy service being regarded as forms of gratitude to God for His great gift of Redemption.

French, Belgic, and Scottish Confessions followed upon similar lines; being respectively adapted to the particular circumstances of their different countries, and chiefly distinguished from the Helvetic Confessions and the Catechism by the greater stress laid, no doubt through the influence of Calvin, on Predestination and the Divine Decrees. In all, no fewer than thirty elaborate Confessions of the Reformed faith have been noted, agreeing in principle but differing in details, into which we need not follow them.

It was, in fact, an era of Confessions. Protestant theologians everywhere were busy in defining their faith; with minute distinctions, attempted solutions of difficulties, correction of one another's

mistakes, and the praiseworthy attempt to confirm every statement by the teaching of Scripture. Even where they taught the same thing, they would differ in the point of view from which they regarded it. Thus it has been noted that in regard to Predestination, on which Lutherans and Calvinists mainly agreed, Luther started from the facts of human corruption and moral impotence, requiring Divine power to overcome them, and Calvin from Divine sovereignty, hence deducing the powerlessness of human nature. The attempt to illustrate the Harmony of Protestant Confessions has been repeatedly made; and in the pages of Dr. George Benedict Winer especially, it is instructively shown how great and fundamental are the truths in which the Protestant Churches agree, how minute and unsubstantial in many cases are those in which they differ. How this is further illustrated in connection with the British Protestant Churches we shall have hereafter to consider. It may be remarked meanwhile that both the great divisions of Protestantism which have now come under our view contributed their several influences to the moulding and guidance of religious faith in the Established and the Free Churches of

our land. The Evangelical and the Reformed by turns appear in the religious life of Great Britain.

In the second generation of Continental Protestantism the Reformed and Evangelical bodies severally issued statements of their belief, of a far more extended and elaborate character than the Confessions on which we have been engaged. The *Second Helvetic Confession*, to which reference has already been made, was published in 1566, the work of Bullinger, two years after the death of Calvin : it is, in fact, a theological treatise rather than a Creed. In thirty chapters, it discusses the main points of theology, with others relating to Christian practice and discipline ; sustaining its positions throughout by copious Scripture references, and forming the basis of every subsequent statement of Calvinistic doctrine. The corresponding document on the Lutheran side is entitled the *Formula of Concord*, fourteen years later, 1580, thirty-four years after Luther's death and twenty after Melanchthon's. The Lutheran communities had become rent by controversies ; as, often, when freedom has been achieved by mighty struggle, the combatants in the flush of

victory are too apt to turn their arms against one another. The purpose of this *Formula*, prepared chiefly by Martin Chemnitz, chief theologian of the Lutheran Church after Luther and Melanchthon, was to reconcile the contending parties, and to affirm the Evangelical Theology on the basis of philosophy and Scripture. It is undoubtedly a masterpiece of controversy, containing, on each several point of the Twelve Articles into which it is divided, a statement of the question at stake, with affirmative and negative sides and carefully-guarded conclusions. It has been very generally, though not universally, adopted by the Lutheran Churches as a supplement and explanation of the Augsburg Confession.[1]

The age of Protestant discussions and Con-

[1] On the part of the Reformed or Swiss theologians a Confession was long afterwards prepared, as a final word on the controversies of the day, by Professors Heidegger of Zurich, Turretin of Geneva, and Pastor Gernler of Basle. This *Formula Consensus Helvetica* (1675) is chiefly noticeable for its uncompromising avowal of the doctrine of verbal and literal inspiration, extending to the Hebrew vowel-points, as against Louis Cappel, who had shown the late origin of the Massorite vocalisation. 'In specie autem Hebraicus Veteris Testamenti codex, quem ex traditione Ecclesiae Judaicae, cui olim oracula Dei commissa sunt, accepimus hodieque retinemus, tum quoad consonas, tum quoad vocalia, sive puncta ipsa, sive punctorum saltem potestatem, et tum quoad res, tum quoad verba, *θεόπνευστος*.'

fessions was naturally a time of special activity among the theologians of the Romish Church. At first, as we have seen, the hope was cherished that an agreement or compromise might be effected with Protestantism. Even after the Augsburg Diet, and its rival statements of doctrine, that hope was not entirely extinct. Luther's Schmalkald Articles were prepared with a view to discussion in a General Council at Mantua, to which Protestant as well as Papal representatives were to be invited. But the logic of events was too powerful to permit, on either side, the continuance of the pleasing illusion; and instead of the imagined *eirenicon* of Mantua came the uncompromising affirmations and anathemas of Trent. The famous Romanist Council sat at intervals for eighteen years (1545-1563) considering questions of doctrine and discipline, effecting many useful reforms, but concentrating all its force on the declaration of a series of dogmas, a counter protest against Protestantism, summarised at the close of the Council in a Declaration of Twelve Articles, promulgated as the *Creed of Pope Pius the Fourth.*[1] Of these Twelve Articles, the first

[1] See Appendix, Note 9.

is a reaffirmation of the Nicene Creed. Those that follow declare full assent to Church Tradition and Authority; to the interpretation of Scripture only according to the Church's teaching and the unanimous consent of the Fathers; to the Seven Sacraments; to the Mass as a Sacrifice, and Transubstantiation; to the doctrine of Purgatory and of deliverance therefrom by the suffrages of the faithful; to the Invocation of Saints, the Adoration of Images, the efficacy of Indulgences; to the supremacy of the Roman Church; and to the canons and decrees of all the Œcumenical Councils, especially of the Council of Trent. The prescribed form of assent was in the words, 'I do at this present freely profess and truly hold this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved; and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolate, with God's assistance, to the end of my life.'

This Creed has ever since been the authoritative standard of Romanist belief; and, with the two dogmas added in our own time, that of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, declared by Papal authority in 1854, and that of the Infallibility of the Pope, decreed by the Vatican

Council in 1870, must be studied by all who would ascertain in brief compass what Rome really teaches on the most important points of Christian Faith and practice.

The comparison of dates is interesting and suggestive. When this Creed of Pius IV. was set forth in 1564, the Confession of Augsburg was thirty-four years old, the First Helvetic Confession twenty-eight, and the Heidelberg Catechism had only just been issued. Luther had been dead for eighteen years, Melanchthon for four, Calvin was dying; and—to pass for a moment beyond the bounds of Theology and Creeds—in this same year Galileo was born in Italy and Shakspeare in England. So brief was the space within which the forces that were to shape the modern life of Christendom had their rise and development; so wonderful the movements of thought that made the middle portion of the sixteenth century, next to the Christian era, the most fruitful and memorable period in the history of mankind.

LECTURE IV

BRITISH CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

THE Reformation in Great Britain was specially marked by the paradoxical combination of a contest for kingly supremacy and a struggle for spiritual freedom. To regard it in the former aspect alone is essentially superficial. Robert Southey sagaciously remarks in his *Life of Wesley*: 'In England the best people, and the worst, combined in bringing about the Reformation; and in its progress it bore evident marks of both.' The revolt of England from the Papacy has often been represented as the result of Henry the Eighth's defiance of the Pope in the matter of the divorce from Queen Katherine; and this is no doubt part of the truth. But the high-handed proceedings of the King were but the culmination of a long series of characteristically English protests against

Papal and priestly domination, of which the Constitutions of Clarendon (1164) were an early conspicuous example, and of which Thomas à Becket was an illustrious victim. For three hundred and fifty years the rivalry between English king and Italian pope had continued, with many phases of alternate humiliation and success, until Henry's masterful will brought on the long inevitable crisis. Yet behind all this there had been growing a silent force of religious conviction, preparing itself for utterance at the destined hour. Had it not been for such conviction, the effort to shake off the yoke of Rome would again have assuredly failed: as it was, the assertion of royal prerogative was supported on quite independent grounds by what was best and deepest in the heart of the people; and the combination was irresistible.

At first, it is true, it might seem that the political yoke had been shattered, only to rivet the spiritual yoke more firmly; and the earliest doctrinal declaration put forth after the royal supremacy had been finally established gave but little hope as to what the new ecclesiastical departure might bring. This Declaration, known as the 'Ten Articles,' purports to have been com-

posed by Henry himself; the first draft having been presented to Convocation by Thomas Crumwell, Vicar-General, the King's trusted adviser, and adopted by the bishops and clergy at the instance of Cranmer, then Archbishop of Canterbury. They were published under the title of *Articles to stablyshe Christen Quietnes and Unitie* (1536).

The first Article runs thus:—

We will that all bishops and preachers shall instruct and teach our people, by us committed to their spiritual charge, that they ought and must most constantly believe and defend all those things to be true which be comprehended in the whole body and canon of the Bible, and also in the Three Creeds or Symbols; whereon one was made by the Apostles and is the common Creed which every man useth; the second was made by the Holy Council of Nice, and is said daily in the Mass; and the third was made by Athanasius, and is comprehended in the Psalm *Quicunque vult;* and that they ought and must take and interpret all the same things according to the selfsame sentence and interpretation, which the words of the said Creeds or Symbols do purport, and the holy approved doctors of the Church do entreat and defend the same.

Item.—That they ought and must repute, hold, and take all the same things for the most holy, most sure, and most certain and infallible words of God, and such as neither ought or can be altered or cavilled by any contrary opinion or authority.

Item.—That they ought and must believe, repute, and

take all the Articles of our Faith contained in the said Creeds to be so necessary to be believed for man's salvation, that whosoever being taught will not believe them as is aforesaid, or will obstinately affirm the contrary of them, he or they cannot be the very members of Christ and His espoused the Church, but be very infidels or heretics, and members of the Devil, with whom they shall perpetually be damned.

There is undoubtedly a crudeness in all this that bespeaks the amateur—a king's first essay to play the Pope!

The second, third, and fourth Articles set forth three Sacraments as generally necessary to salvation: Baptism, Penance, and the Eucharist. On Baptism, it is said that infants and children dying in their infancy shall undoubtedly be saved thereby, or else not. On Penance, auricular confession is distinctly enjoined. 'The people,' it is said, 'ought and must give no less faith and credence to the words of absolution pronounced by the ministers of the Church than they would give unto the very words and voice of God Himself, if He should speak to us out of heaven.' On the Eucharist, it is affirmed that in 'the Sacrament of the Altar,' under the form and figure of Bread and Wine, was 'verily, substantially, and really contained and comprehended the very selfsame Body

and Blood of our Saviour Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary and suffered upon the Cross for man's redemption.' The fifth Article treats of Justification, which is declared to signify Remission of Sin and acceptance into the favour of God: that is to say, man's perfect renovation in Christ. 'Sinners,' it is said, 'obtain Justification by Contrition and Faith, joined with Charity; not as though Contrition or Faith, or works proceeding therefrom, could worthily merit the said justification; for the only Mercy and Grace of the Father, promised freely unto us for the Son's sake, and the merits of His Blood and Passion, are the only sufficient and worthy causes thereof: notwithstanding, God requireth to the attaining of the same justification, not only inward contrition, perfect faith and charity, certain hope and confidence, with all other spiritual graces and motions; but also He requireth and commandeth us that after we be justified we must also have good works of charity and obedience towards God.'

The next four Articles deal approvingly with the adoration of Images, especially of Christ and our Lady, the honour to be paid to the Saints, the invocation of Saints; rites and ceremonies,

enumerated as 'things not to be contemned and cast away, but to be used and continued as good and laudable, to put men in remembrance of those spiritual things that they signify, not suffering them to be forgot or to be put in oblivion, but renewing them in our memories. But none of these ceremonies,' it is added, 'have power to remit sin.'

The last Article is on Purgatory, affirming on the one hand that 'it is good to pray for souls departed,' but on the other declaring that, 'as the nature of the unseen world is left uncertain by Scripture, all we can do is to commend them to the mercy of God, trusting that He will accept our prayers on their behalf.' It is therefore 'much necessary that such abuses should be clearly put away which, under the name of purgatory, have been advanced as to make men believe that, through the Bishop of Rome's pardons, men might be delivered out of purgatory and all the pains of it; or that masses, said at any place or before any image, might deliver them from their pain and send them straight to heaven.'

Here are undoubtedly some gleams of light; and a tractate, prepared by Cranmer, assisted by

a committee of prelates, that soon followed, under the title of *The Institution of a Christian Man*, popularly called 'The Bishops' Book,' shows yet more plainly how far the principles of the Reformation were affecting the best and most religious minds in England. But the wave had its flux and reflux. As ever in the history of the world and of the Church, the old and the new came into fresh and often unforeseen collisions. The 'Old learning,' as it was called, was represented by Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester. Cranmer was the champion of the New, or, as we should say, of the 'modern thought' of the period; and by his influence it came about that in 1538, two years after the publication of the 'Ten Articles,' negotiations were opened between the English king and the Lutheran princes for further conference on theological matters. Three envoys were accordingly sent from Germany to meet the Anglican representatives. One of these envoys was to have been Melanchthon himself, at the King's express invitation. He was, however, detained at Wittenberg by affairs of State, as well as by the necessity of remaining at his post in the University. The Conferences were held at Lambeth, and issued in

the adoption of Thirteen Articles, largely taken from the Augsburg Confession, although with considerable expansion, particularly on the topics of Justification and the Church. The manuscript of these Articles was discovered early in the present century among Cranmer's papers. They mark a very distinct advance in the direction of Protestantism, and, although never legalised, are of high interest as forming the basis of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England.

The reactionary party was probably alarmed by the progressive tendencies displayed in these Thirteen Articles, and almost immediately procured the enactment, in spite of Cranmer's most strenuous opposition, of the infamous 'Six Articles' (1539), afterwards known as 'the Whip with Six Strings,' which for a time reimposed the yoke of Romanism upon the English people in its most galling form; death at the stake being denounced as the penalty for denying Transubstantiation.[1] The other Articles, to be accepted on pain of imprisonment, and death in case of persistent denial, were Communion by the laity in one kind

[1] See the Act in full in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, edited by H. Gee and W. J. Hardy (1896), p. 303.

only, Priestly Celibacy, Permanence of Monastic and other Vows, Private Masses and Auricular Confession. The 'Bishops' Book' was now superseded for popular use by a treatise called 'The King's Book,' entitled *A Necessary Knowledge and Erudition for every Christian Man* (1543), in which Romish tenets were uncompromisingly enforced.

The reaction was tremendous. In fact, the King had been thoroughly alarmed by the consequences of his own procedure just before, in giving the English Bible to the people; and terrified persons are often cruel. For in 1535, four years previously, the whole Bible had appeared in English, as translated by Myles Coverdale; and in this very year of the Six Articles the edition called the Great Bible had been published, with that memorable frontispiece, designed, as some say, by Holbein—King Henry on the throne, handing copies of the Book on either side, to Cranmer and to Crumwell—representatives of the clergy and laity; a great crowd of whom are shown below, receiving the royal gift with joyful acclamations. This Bible was ordered to be placed in the churches so as to be at all times accessible to the people; and it is sadly curious

to read in the light of subsequent history that six copies were placed, in pursuance of this regulation, in St. Paul's Cathedral, by the notorious Bishop Bonner. At once, however, it became plain that the King had not calculated the result of thus giving an open Bible to the English people. He complains that 'his intent and hope had been that the Scriptures would be read with meekness, with a will to accomplish the effect of them; not for the purpose of finding arguments to maintain extravagant opinions, not that they should be spouted out and declaimed upon at undue times and places, and after such fashions as were not convenient to be suffered.'[1] So, as an antidote to a free Bible, came the Six Articles. It was not the first time nor the last when those who claim to dictate opinion have said, 'Yes: you may read the Bible for yourselves, on condition of finding in it what we ordain; or it will be the worse for you!'

It was in vain that Melanchthon wrote a long and elaborate letter to the King himself, earnestly protesting against the enactment. The persecution was rigorously carried on; many persons

[1] Strype, *Memorials*, ii. 434.

were imprisoned; others fled the country and found shelter in the Protestant states of Europe; and it was under this infamous Act that the heroic Ann Askew suffered in Smithfield in the last year of King Henry's reign.

Henry died in 1547, and was succeeded by his son Edward the Sixth, under whom Cranmer and the Reformation party once more gained ascendency. The first step towards religious freedom was to abolish the Six Articles, Gardiner being deposed and imprisoned. Then for a while the great Archbishop bent his endeavours to the accomplishment of a purpose magnificently conceived, but destined to remain unfulfilled. His dream was that all Protestant Confessions might be combined in one Declaration of the common Faith, in which the Evangelical and Reformed Churches on the Continent, as well as those of Great Britain, might agree. Probably, in view of the controversies still raging between Lutherans and Zwinglians, he thought that the Anglican Church might exert a moderating and harmonising influence; and that one evangelical Catholic Creed, maintained in common by all who held

fast to the authority of Scripture, would enable the Protestant world to present a firm, united front against the assumptions of the Papacy.

The circumstances of the time seemed to call for such an endeavour. The Council of Trent continued its intermittent sessions. Rome was reasserting with new vigour of anathemas its spiritual sway. Jesuitism was arising, as a new and ominous power in the world. Could not Protestantism raise a clear, united, authoritative voice? Filled with such thoughts and ambitions, Cranmer entered into correspondence with the great Divines of the Continent. Luther was dead, but Melanchthon represented the Evangelical cause, Calvin and Bullinger the Reformed. Cranmer's letters to all three survive—urgent and often impassioned pleadings; steps were actually taken for holding a Conference in London; but after much debate as to conditions, and difficulties arising from the sacramentarian views of the Lutheran party, the project was abandoned. 'It is,' wrote Cranmer sadly, 'the sorest evil of the Church that the Sacrament of Unity should be the source of discord and division.'[1] But even Cranmer

[1] *Letters of Cranmer*, in Strype, 284.

did not apprehend the whole case. Since his time, the history of the Churches must have shown all who have eyes to see, that however imposing the thought of one common Creed may be, the unity of the Faith is not thus to be realised. When Christians are living one life, their fellowship in belief also may in time result from that sacred accord; else the proposal of a formula for verbal agreement to those who are discordant in heart and spirit will prove the most barren of hypocrisies.

The larger scheme being thus frustrated, the Archbishop and his associates, with their young monarch's active sympathy, set themselves to prepare an English Confession; or, in the language of the King's Council, 'A Book of Articles of Religion, for the preserving and maintaining peace and unity of doctrine in this Church, that being finished, they might be set forth by public authority.' A Liturgy had already been compiled, known as *King Edward's First Prayer-Book*, including a Catechism for children, existing to this day with but slight alteration as 'The Church Catechism.' The outcome was in the Forty-two Articles of 1552. In forwarding the corrected

copy to the Council, Cranmer writes: 'I trust that such a concord and quietness in Religion shall shortly follow thereof as else is not to be looked for many years.'[1]

Vain anticipation! In the very year (1553) in which these Articles were published by royal proclamation, King Edward died. Mary became Queen; the whole work was ruthlessly undone. Three years afterwards Cranmer died at the stake; and all proceedings in regard to what we may term the first Protestant Confession of the Church of England were postponed until 1562, when Queen Elizabeth was fairly established upon the throne. Matthew Parker, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, had already, as a kind of provisional declaration of the Faith, introduced a scheme of Eleven Articles, which are chiefly remarkable as a yet more explicit avowal of that Protestantism which was henceforth to be the authorised religion of the realm. Of these Articles all clergy were required to make public profession, both on admission to their benefices and in the Communion Service twice every year.[2] But the Thirty-nine Articles,

[1] Strype's *Life of Cranmer*, ii. Appendix lxiv.

[2] These Eleven Articles remained for fifty years the authorised standard of doctrine in the Established Church of Ireland.

as we still may read them in the English Prayer-Book, soon superseded all other declarations of faith in the Anglican Church. These are substantially the same with the Forty-two Articles of Cranmer, with some omissions, and a few added particulars.[1] Six in all were omitted, two of the remainder were incorporated in one, and four were added, besides parts of others. The Articles were not numbered until 1591, when the English translation was published. A very notable addition, generally attributed to Elizabeth herself, is that in the Twenty-first Article. Cranmer had been content with the negative assertion: 'It is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written.' But now it is declared: 'The Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith. And yet it is not lawful,' etc. But on the other hand, in the Thirty-seventh Article, the royal claim to headship of the Church is explicitly renounced. Cranmer had written: 'The King of England is supreme Head, in earth, under Christ, of the Church of England and Ireland.' Elizabeth modi-

[1] See Appendix, Note 10: *Articles of the Reformed Church of England.*

fied this to: 'The Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England and other her dominions, unto whom the chief government of all Estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, doth in all cases appertain.'

The omissions were chiefly of four Articles at the end. Strype tells us how Archbishop Parker struck them out 'with his red pencil,' thus disallowing them, not probably because he disbelieved their teaching, but because he thought it unnecessary to constitute them Articles of Faith. One of these affirmed that 'the Resurrection of the dead is not brought to pass'; another denied the sleep of the soul between death and the judgment; and the two following I may quote:—

'XLI. They that go about to renew the fable of heretics called Millenarians, be repugnant to Holy Scripture, and cast themselves headlong into a Jewish dotage.'

And

'XLII. They also are worthy of condemnation who endeavour at this time to restore the dangerous opinion that all men, be they never so ungodly, shall at length be saved, when they have

suffered pains for their sins a certain time appointed by God's justice.'

The Thirty-nine Articles, having been finally settled, were enforced upon the Clergy by an Act entitled, characteristically enough, *A Bill for the Ministers of the Church to be of Sound Religion.* Subscription to the Articles was further required by an Act of 1571,[1] and yet more rigorously in 1583.

There was a significant attempt, in the year 1595, to add to the document what were known as the Lambeth Articles, strongly Calvinistic, composed by Dr. Whitaker, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and submitted through Whitgift, then Archbishop of Canterbury, with a synod of prelates convened by him, as a counter-action to the growing theological liberalism of the day.[2] These Articles, nine in number, affirm in the strongest terms the predestination of some to life, the reprobation of others to death, and the certainty of final perseverance wherever justifying grace is given; adding that 'saving grace is not given, is not granted, is not communicated to

[1] See the Act (13 Eliz. cap. 12) in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, p. 477.

[2] See Appendix, Note 11: *The Lambeth Articles* (original Latin).

all men, by which they may be saved if they will.' Queen Elizabeth, however, would have none of them; and nine years afterwards, when the Hampton Court Conference of Divines petitioned King James to allow their adoption, his Majesty absolutely refused. In fact, the British Solomon seems to have been afraid of anything that looked like extreme Calvinism, as is curiously illustrated by a letter of his to Archbishop Abbot, Whitgift's successor, charging him to circulate a number of 'Directions to Preachers' among the clergy of his province. One of these Directions is:—'That no preacher of what title soever, under the degree of a bishop, or dean at least, do from henceforth presume to preach in any popular auditory the deep points of predestination, election, reprobation, or of the universality, efficacy, resistibility or irresistibility of God's grace; but leave those themes to be handled by learned men, and that moderately and modestly, by way of use and application rather than by way of positive doctrine; as being fitter for the schools and universities than for simple auditories.'[1] At the same time, the ruling powers

[1] 'Directions concerning Preachers': in *Documents* before quoted, p. 516.

were sufficiently resolved that the older Articles should be upheld and believed, as appears in the Declaration of King Charles the First (1628) drawn up by Laud, then newly appointed Bishop of London, and still to be read in the English Prayer-Book at the beginning of the Articles; although generally, I must say, in very small, shamefaced type:—

> The Articles of the Church of England (which have been allowed and authorised heretofore, and which Our Clergy generally have subscribed unto) do contain the true Doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's Word; which We do therefore ratify and confirm, requiring all Our loving subjects to continue in the uniform profession thereof, and prohibiting the least difference from the said Articles; which to that end We command to be new printed, and this Our Declaration to be published therewith.

There is much more to the same purpose, all equally instructive. No doubt it may be said—it has been said—that such injunctions could never have been literally meant. It is too absurd to ask all men to believe, in this implicit way, some hundreds of propositions, without 'the least difference' therefrom. Yes; it is no doubt absurd—the very crown and climax of all absurdities—but that alone is no reason why it should not have

been committed by such a monarch as Charles Stuart and such a prelate as William Laud.

In the meantime the Scottish Church was putting forth its several Confessions, marked, I think, by a deeper insight into Divine Truth, and by the assertion of a broader religious freedom than their English brethren had yet attained. The first of these Confessions dates from 1560: 'the banner,' says Edward Irving, 'of the Church in all her wrestlings and conflicts.' Well does the great preacher describe this manifesto of the faith, which at every point exhibits the intellectual insight, the commanding intellectual power, and the burning enthusiasm of John Knox. 'The document,' says Irving, 'consisteth of twenty-five articles, and is written in a most honest, straightforward, manly style, without compliment or flattery, without affectation of logical precision and learned accuracy, as if it came fresh from the heart of laborious workmen, all the day long busy with the preaching of the Truth, and sitting down at night to embody the heads of what was continually taught. There is a freshness of life about it which no frequency of reading wears off.'

It will suffice to notice here two striking points about this Confession. One is, that it disclaims Divine authority for any fixed form of Church Government or Worship. Practically, as we know, the Scottish Church was Presbyterian; yet this did not lead to the unchurching of Christian societies of differently constituted form and pattern. We have been accustomed to think of our Scottish brethren as rigid and unbending in all ecclesiastical matters. Yet this is what they say in 1560:—

> In the Church, as in the House of God, it becometh all things to be done decently and in order: not that we think that one policy and one order of ceremonies can be appointed for all ages, times, and places; for, as ceremonies such as men have prescribed are but temporal, so may and ought they to be changed when they rather foster superstition than edify the Church using the same.

The next point is more significant still; and it will be remembered that the words I am now about to quote very nearly accord with the language of one of the Swiss Confessions. Whether thence derived, or whether original, it deserves to be specially noted:—

> 'We protest,' say these Scotchmen of 1560, 'that if any one will note in this our Confession any Articles or sentence repugnant to God's Holy Word, that it would please him

of his gentleness, and for Christian charity's sake, to admonish us of the same in writing; and we, upon our honour and fidelity, by God's grace do promise unto him satisfaction from the mouth of God (that is, from His Holy Scriptures), or else reformation of that which he shall prove to be amiss.'

A teachable spirit has not always thus accompanied the formulation of Creeds. The more ordinary style has been, 'Such is the dogma given by Divine authority; and we are its prophets. Anathema to those who dissent!' Switzerland and Scotland showed a more excellent way; and we shall soon have the happiness of pointing to others who have followed their bright example.

The whole course of procedure in regard to national Articles of Religion had been based upon the assumption, which few in that age ventured to contradict, that the nation formed a religious unity, and must be governed by one Creed as surely as, in secular matters, it was bound to obey one Law. As Richard Hooker put the theory with marvellous clearness, near the close of the Elizabethan period, the National Church was simply the Nation from a religious point of view.

The same persons constituted Church and Commonwealth, and the authorised rulers must legislate for them in both capacities. With our modern modes of thought we can hardly apprehend what in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a recognised first principle. Between our conception of the Church or Churches *in* a nation, and that of the Church *of* a nation, a whole world of difference lies. Collectivism in religious matters was the law; individualism was contumacy and rebellion; and diversity of opinion was no more to be tolerated than disloyalty and rebellion in the State.

Yet meanwhile there were growing and notable exceptions. Puritanism by degrees became a power in England, and could not but lead to separatism also. Not only was Presbyterianism a rapidly increasing influence even within the pale of the Establishment, but from time to time we have glimpses of little companies of Christian people who bravely detached themselves, regardless of consequences, from the ecclesiastical system, uttering protests which often brought upon them bitter persecution, and in some cases the crown of martyrdom. To these Confessors of the faith, in Queen Elizabeth's time, belonged Barrow, Green-

wood, and John Penry; while the anonymous *Martin Marprelate Tracts* caustically maintained the same dissent. Robert Browne, a clergyman of some note, wrote and preached in the latter part of the reign, from a strongly Puritan standpoint, against the National Church, and was imprisoned, he tells us, thirty-two times, being also exiled, and finding a refuge in Holland, long the home of expatriated dissidents. From him the early Independents were for a time known as Brownists; but as Browne in the end conformed to the Establishment, and lapsed into idle and dissolute ways, they afterwards disowned the name. Our concern with these personages and events is limited at present to the Confessions which at intervals emanated from the Puritan separatists; and in 1578 we find a somewhat elaborate statement of belief by the learned Henry Ainsworth, leader of a company exiled to Holland for their faith. The Confession is in forty-five Articles regarding doctrine and discipline; and while emphatically Protestant and Evangelical, it contains a statement of Congregational principles, the clearness and precision of which could hardly be surpassed in our own day.

Another declaration, equally interesting, was made, also in Holland, by forty-two persons, men and women, exiled on the charge of Anabaptism. This document deserves our special notice as the earliest extant Baptist Confession of Faith in post-Reformation times. It is dated from Amsterdam, in 1611, the year in which the Authorised Version of the English Bible was published, and contains twenty-eight Articles, at the close of which the forty-two signatures are followed by a sentence reminding us of what we have noted in the Scottish Confession of 1560: 'We subscribe to the truth of these Articles, desiring further instruction.'

This Baptist Confession is additionally remarkable in its departure from Calvinistic dogmas. Up to this time the Puritans in Great Britain, following the Reformed Church in Germany and Switzerland, had adhered to the doctrines of Calvin and Bucer; but Arminius (or Hermann) had been teaching in Amsterdam; his followers, termed for a while Remonstrants, from the Remonstrance delivered by them to the States of Holland, had become very numerous, and these exiled English Baptists had been largely influenced

by them, while holding fast by the essentials of Evangelical Christianity. They were, in fact, the forerunners of the General Baptists of modern times.

The Article (11) concerning the Church is worth transcribing :—

> That though in respect of Christ the Church be one, yet it consisteth of divers particular Congregations, even so many as there shall be in the world ; every of which Congregations, though they be but two or three, have Christ given them, with all the means of their salvation ; are the body of Christ and a whole Church, and therefore may, and ought when they come together, to pray, prophesy, break bread, and administer in all the holy ordinances, although as yet they have no officers, or that their officers should be in prison, sick, or by any means hindered from the Church.

The growth of Arminianism was, it need hardly be said, regarded with much uneasiness by the leaders of the Reformed Church. It was time—so it seemed to them—to reopen the discussion of those questions which have occupied metaphysical speculators ever since philosophy began, and which have derived their chief interest from religious thought. A Synod of divines was therefore convened at Dordrecht, or Dort, in Holland, in 1619 ; certain English theologians attending as

delegates.[1] At this memorable gathering, after long debates, conducted with forms of the driest logic, yet not without outbursts of passionate heat, on problems of Divine omniscience and human free-will—which, I suppose, will remain unsettled till the end of time—the Five Points, as they are called, of Calvinistic theology were affirmed by vote in opposition to the Remonstrants. These Points were Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Total Depravity, Irresistible Grace, and Final Perseverance. For several generations, both in Germany and Great Britain, the 'Quinquarticular Formula' was among the recognised standards of Puritanism.[2]

Seven years after the Synod of Dort, and once more in Holland, we are called to listen to what must always remain among the most striking and characteristic declarations that have ever proceeded from nonconforming English Puritanism. I refer to words of John Robinson, the Pastor of the Independent Congregation at Leyden, in bidding farewell to members of his flock about to depart for America. True, it is not, strictly speaking, a

[1] See Appendix, Note 12 : *Articles of the Dutch Remonstrants.*

[2] The Canons of Dort, Latin and English, are given in full in Schaff, pp. 550-597.

Confession of Faith, but simply a valedictory address. Yet a passage may be quoted here, as worthily following the declaration of those Baptist exiles who, as we have seen, so frankly expressed their readiness to welcome further light. Mr. Robinson says :—

> If God reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed Churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; whatever part of His will our God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it; and the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented, for though they were burning and shining lights in their lives, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God; but, were they now living, would be as willing to embrace further as that which they first received. I beseech you remember it is an article of your church covenant that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written Word of God.[1]

Such were the Independents and Baptists of

[1] Hanbury's *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, 1839, vol. i. p. 393, note.

those early days. Such is the spirit by which in our own time the true life of the Church must be maintained. By men who trust themselves, not to the letter of human interpretations, but to the living Word of God and to the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and who believe, as shown in the next Lecture, in a progressive theology, will the victories of the faith be won.

But great events now followed in the British realms. Charles I. had begun his ill-starred reign. Attempts were renewed to impose the ecclesiastical yoke more rigidly upon the people both of England and in Scotland; and this, together with the absolutism of King and Court in civil matters, aroused the spirit of fierce and determined resistance. In 1640 the Long Parliament began its sittings. Two years later the Civil War broke out; and in 1643 the Westminster Assembly of Divines was convened 'for further settlement of religious doctrine and discipline in the Kingdom by authority of Parliament.' The sessions of this great Assembly continued from 1644 to 1649. It was intended to consist of Episcopalians and Presbyterians, with representatives from the In-

dependents, now a growing community. The Episcopalians, however, in deference to the King's command, soon ceased to attend; the Independents were comparatively few; and the Assembly soon became dominated by Presbyterianism.

The Confession and two Catechisms put forth by the Assembly certainly rank among the ablest and most comprehensive statements of theological truth ever made. At first the plan was simply a revision of the Thirty-nine Articles; but, through the influence of the Scottish members of the Assembly, the Confession was made an independent document, taking two years to complete, and afterwards discussed by Parliament, chapter by chapter, 'on successive Wednesdays.'[1] By the Scottish Parliament it was adopted in the following year, superseding the Confessions of the preceding century, and accompanied by two Catechisms, the Larger, for public exposition, and the Shorter, for the instruction of the young. The Confession, as we all know, has always had a firmer hold in Scotland than in England. But at first it was intended to embrace the three kingdoms. In the language of the Solemn League

[1] Finished 22nd March 1648.

and Covenant by which it was heralded: 'We shall endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the Three Kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in Religion, Confession of Faith, form of Church Government, directions for Worship and Catechising, that we and our posterity after us may as brethren live in Faith and Love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.' The whole realm was thus to be brought religiously under one law. Not yet made wise by events, the Fathers of this great Council, like those of so many Councils of the Church in olden time, believed that with them was the secret of a Catholic Christianity, and that it was their duty to secure its enforcement on the whole nation. In fact, as Dean Stanley has observed, the Westminster Confession is the only Confession of Faith that was ever imposed on the whole of the United Kingdom. 'The Thirty-nine Articles never extended beyond the limits of Berwick-upon-Tweed, but the Confession of Faith reigned with undisputed authority for ten years, under the authority of Parliament, from Cape Wrath to Land's End.'[1]

The contents of this great declaration of faith

[1] *Macmillan's Magazine*, August 1881.

cannot here be summarised even in the briefest manner. Suffice it to say, that it contains a lucid, comprehensive, and well-ordered statement, in thirty-three chapters, of the Evangelical Faith, from the standpoint of an uncompromising Calvinism. Its keynote is Sovereignty, recognised all the more implicitly in the spiritual realm because repudiated in the earthly sphere. 'The Decrees of God are His Eternal Purpose, according to the Counsel of His Will, whereby, for His own Glory, He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.' And man's part is to accept the decrees with entire submission. At the beginning of the Shorter Catechism stands the question and answer, borrowed indeed mainly from Calvin, 'What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever.' First 'to glorify God,' a sterner lesson than that of love; standing like a proclamation, announcing the supreme principle of life. Thomas Carlyle, in speaking against modern materialism, said in 1876, the last year of his life: 'The older I grow, and I now stand upon the brink of Eternity, the more comes back to me the first sentence in the Catechism which I learned when a child, and the fuller and deeper its mean-

ing becomes: "What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever."'[1]

The Confession, adopted and enforced by Parliament, was thus a great Act of Uniformity. Its framers repudiated with abhorrence the idea of toleration. Was it not the duty of all men to receive and obey the truth? Only let the rulers of the nation discover the truth, and its enforcement must follow as a matter of course. To Richard Baxter, who, though not a member of the Assembly, well understood its spirit, the thought of religious toleration was the great ecclesiastical heresy of the day. Of certain persons in the Assembly and other Sectaries, as he terms them, outside, his bitter complaint is[2] that 'their most frequent and vehement disputes were for liberty of conscience, as they called it—that is, that the civil magistrate had nothing to do to determine anything in matters of religion, by constraint or restraint, but every man might not only hold, but preach and do, in matters of religion, what he pleased; that the civil magistrate had nothing to do but with civil things, to keep the peace, and

[1] Schaff, *History of the Creeds*, p. 787.
[2] Baxter's *Life and Times*, ed. Sylvester.

protect the Church's liberties.' But already the spirit of repression was being worsted in its contest with the spirit of freedom. Mr. J. R. Green, the historian, quotes 'a horror-stricken pamphleteer' who numbered sixteen religious sects that existed in defiance of the law; while, on the other hand, the rigour of Puritan rule did much to provoke that reaction in the popular mind which rendered possible the Act of Uniformity that followed the Restoration of Charles the Second. And yet the Presbyterian Churches in our own day are living witnesses to all that was permanent and mighty, as well as true, in this memorable Confession of Westminster; while a people trained in the Shorter Catechism have maintained high qualities of faith, courage, and vigour which for many generations have ennobled their religious life, when only combined with brotherly kindness and charity.

The Independents in the Assembly, outvoted at every point, and ceasing to attend when the Presbyterian form of Church government was formally adopted, nevertheless exerted all through the protectorate of Cromwell a great and growing influence in England. So far indeed did that influence extend, that Cromwell was at length

induced to authorise the preparation of a new Confession of Faith for the whole Commonwealth—yet, as it is now for the first time stated, 'without compelling the people thereto by penalties, and to extend liberty to all Christian professions, except popery or prelacy.' This last exception is curious. The Conference for this purpose was summoned to meet at the Savoy in London; but Cromwell's death intervened (1658), and the meeting, which was attended by about two hundred delegates from one hundred and twenty congregations, under the presidency of Philip Nye, was but brief, lasting only a fortnight, as well as anxious and troubled, in the uncertainty of what might befall. The Confession was unanimously voted, and was issued with an expression of thankfulness that the Churches 'launched singly and sailing apart and alone in the vast ocean of these tumultuary times, and exposed to every wind of doctrine, under no other conduct than that of the Word and Spirit, had nevertheless steered their course by the same chart, and been bound for one and the same port, without associating among ourselves, or so much as holding out common lights to others whereby to know where we were.'

Thus the great lesson, of trust in the Spirit of God to guide His people, was being gradually learned—although it was still thought necessary to formulate a Creed of thirty-two Chapters, with a Statement of Church Order and Discipline in thirty subsequent clauses. This Savoy Confession was long accepted as the chief manifesto of Independent faith and doctrine. Its theology throughout is that of the Westminster Confession, while it lucidly states and maintains the Congregational order of the Churches.[1]

Nor were the Baptists remiss in asserting their special beliefs. Denied a place in the Westminster Assembly, and whilst it was yet sitting, in 1644, the Baptist Congregations meeting in London found it necessary to issue a more elaborate declaration of their principles, entitled *A Confession of Faith of Seven Congregations or Churches in London, which are commonly but unjustly called Anabaptists, published for the Vindication of the Truth and Information of the Ignorant: likewise for the taking off of those aspersions which*

[1] See the Confession in detail, Hanbury's *Historical Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 577 *sq.*

are frequently both in Pulpit and Print unjustly cast upon them. The doctrinal statements in this Confession are decidedly Calvinistic, Scripture references being copiously interspersed. In a great measure, the Westminster Confession is anticipated, but with more rhetorical expansion, and greater tenderness of tone. There are in all fifty-two Articles; and in conclusion the representatives of these Seven Churches declare:—

> We confess that we know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things which we desire and seek to know: and if any shall do us that friendly part to show us from the Word of God that we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and them. But, if any man shall impose upon us anything that we see not to be commanded by Our Lord Jesus Christ, we should in His strength rather embrace all reproaching and tortures of men, to be stripped of all outward comforts, and if it were possible, to die a thousand deaths, rather than do anything against the least tittle of the Truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences. And if any shall call what we have said heresy, then do we with the Apostle acknowledge, that after the way they call heresy, worship we the God of our fathers; disclaiming all heresies (rightly so called) because they are against Christ, and to be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in obedience to Christ, as knowing our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Of the Baptist Confessions which followed,

including a statement issued by the Arminian, or General, Baptists, presented in 1660 to King Charles the Second, by far the most important is the Calvinistic Confession of 1677, ratified by an assembly of ministers and messengers of Baptist Churches met in London in 1689 as soon as toleration was secured, with an argumentative Appendix on the subject of Baptism, and accompanied by a Catechism for the instruction of the young. These documents, closely following the Westminster lines of Theology, while explicit on the subject of Believers' Baptism, are for us the best and most authentic guide to the principles and practices of our forefathers. They will be found, with the other Baptist documents to which I have referred, in Dr. Underhill's valuable collection of *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, published by the Hanserd Knollys Society.

To the same period belong John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *Holy War;* and perhaps, after the long review of Creeds and Confessions in which we have been engaged, we shall be inclined to agree with the late Dr. R. W. Dale when he says that as an expression and guide of faith, 'Bunyan's *Grace Abound-*

ing is of more authority than the *Institutes of Calvin.*'

But one further Confession of this period remains to be mentioned, which, in its real though for the most part silent influence, has exerted as true a power over many of the best and devoutest Christian minds as any other of the series. The *Apology of Robert Barclay for the Society of Friends*, published in 1675, was addressed 'to the Doctors, Professors, and Students of Divinity in the Universities and Schools of Great Britain, and to any other'—to whom Barclay declares that 'man in his wisdom hath rendered the truth so obscure and mysterious that the Word is even burdened with the great and voluminous tractates which are made about it, and by their vain jangling and commentaries, by which it is rendered a hundredfold more dark and intricate than of itself it is: which great learning, so accounted of—to wit, your school divinity, which taketh up at most a man's lifetime to learn—brings not a whit nearer to God, neither makes any man less wicked or more righteous than he was.' From this promising commencement Barclay proceeds, in fifteen

propositions, to declare what the Friends hold to be the truth concerning Revelation and Scripture, the Fall and Redemption, the Inward Light and direct communication of the Holy Spirit with the souls of men, the ministry, worship, and ordinances of the Church, with the freedom of conscience from all secular control. All who would understand the influence which this comparatively small community has exercised over the religious thought and life even of those who have not accepted its special doctrines, may well study them in the pages of Robert Barclay.

The Creed of the Moravian Church is rather a Liturgy than a Confession—very beautiful, but scarcely to be included under the head of Creeds; and the Wesleyan Methodist Churches of Great Britain and America for the most part abide by the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, interpreted in an Arminian sense, with the *Scripture Notes* and the *Sermons* of Mr. Wesley. Strictly speaking, they have no special Creed.

We come now to our own times, and shall have hereafter to speak of the modifications that have been made in the Anglican, Presbyterian, as well

as in other Churches respecting the law of Subscription to Creeds. It is only important now to note that the Congregational Union of England and Wales in the year 1833 adopted a *Declaration* or *Confession of Faith, Church Order, and Discipline*, prepared, I believe, by the late Dr. Redford of Worcester, in all thirty-three Articles, still annually printed at the end of the Year-Book of the Denomination, with certain preliminary notes, that we shall also have to consider.[1] There is no Baptist Confession of the same kind. Only in the covenants of particular Churches, in the rules of some local Associations, and in the trust-deeds of property, many various Confessional forms have been introduced, with more or less binding authority. Some among us have desired a more stringent and uniform Creed; but the history of the past hardly encourages any such attempt.

I conclude with a grateful mention of the fact that, in our own body, one line of demarcation has disappeared, less from any formal action of the Churches than from the irresistible tendency of liberal Christian thought. For many years,

[1] See Appendix, Note 14.

at least from 1691, the Particular or Calvinistic Baptist Churches, and the General or Arminian, formed two separate denominations; but it had long been found in practice that opinions upon the Five Points were no hindrance to a true Christian fellowship; and this separateness of organisation has now come to an end. It is undoubtedly still open to individual Churches to adopt a distinctive Creed; but for general denominational action, as in Home and Foreign Missions, the Colleges, and Societies for general Christian purposes, the two are henceforth one, and—may we not say with thankfulness?—there is one sect the less in Christendom.

Happy is the omen! In the progress of the age may it be more and more fulfilled!

LECTURE V

VALUE AND LIMITATIONS OF CREEDS

THE long series of Creeds and Confessions now passed under review may well have awakened many thoughts on the varieties of human opinion, and on the difficulties of the independent thinker who would win his way to Truth. Here are hundreds of propositions—some coincident, many more or less divergent, not a few absolutely contradictory; yet all professedly drawn from the same Divine Revelation, and in various tones of dogmatism demanding our belief. It is true that on the deeper matters of Faith there is substantial accord, at least in the great Protestant Confessions; and the *Harmonies* of these Confessions that have been laboriously constructed and republished in various forms, from the year 1589 onwards, abundantly illustrate the unity which underlies much

of the diversity, and perhaps indicate a groundwork for the Catholic Church of the future.[1] Still the question occurs, Why have recourse to these human statements of the Divine, when the Divine Oracles themselves are at hand? It is harder work to examine, to discriminate, and to decide between these various Creeds, than it is to study and apply the Word of God Himself as contained in Holy Scripture. The explanations are more difficult than the text.

Yet there is much value of an indirect kind in all these declarations.

1. This value is partly historical. The Creeds are an index to men's thoughts about God and His Truth in successive ages: they show the controversies in which the Church became entangled; they illustrate at many points the relation between the world's philosophy and the Christian religion; and, above all, they reveal the modes of thought from which faith and enthusiasm sprang in ages unlike our own. It is good to be

[1] See *The Confessions of Christendom*, by Dr. G. Benedict Winer, especially the introduction by Prof. W. B. Pope, in Clarks' ed. 1873. The Comparative Tables at the end of that volume will be found suggestive and useful. On the whole subject see Appendix, Note 13: *Comparative Symbolics and the Harmony of Confessions.*

able thus to read the secret of the changeful and progressive life of the Church, to apprehend those conceptions of the Divine that once ministered to devoutness and sanctity; and it is sadly interesting to note, among the paradoxes of the past, what views and convictions were once so intensely held that sincere and earnest men were in their day not only ready to burn other men for contradicting them, but, if the need should arise, as ready to be burned themselves in their defence.

2. Another incidental advantage of Creeds is that which attaches to every careful exposition of the Truth. Perhaps we are sometimes too indiscriminating in our use of the phrases 'The Bible and the Bible alone': 'The Bible without note or comment.' As a matter of fact, notes and comments are often most serviceable, whether uttered from the pulpit by a competent preacher, or embodied by a theologian in his arguments, or expressed by a religious community in its Confessions. Such helps we cannot afford to cast away; only let us use them rightly. It may be quite true that there is in the whole world no such accumulation of superfluities, or monuments of

wasted thought, as may be found on the undisturbed and dusty shelves of a great theological library; and yet there are select souls that have from time to time taken in hand the task of illuminating for us and interpreting the deep things of God; and for their labours, whether expressed in commentary or Creed, we may be duly though never slavishly grateful.

3. Then, further, the Creed will contribute to the clearness and consistency of our own thoughts. It will say for us what we could not so well have said for ourselves, and the distinct utterance will give distinctness to our conceptions. Hence the value of certain technicalities. They gather to an illuminated point that which existed in some confused, half-nebulous form in our own minds. In this lies the vindication of many terms not used in Scripture, yet found in the Creeds. There was an ancient orthodox sect which rejected the word ὁμοούσιος because non-Biblical; and such words and phrases as *Trinity*, *Hypostatical Union*, *Sacrament*, *Original Sin*, *Effectual Calling*, and many more, have been exposed to a similar objection. Now it is an undoubted evil when such phrases become in any way substituted for thought, or

when they are regarded as carrying authority with them, as though a dubious doctrine were confirmed by the magic of a formula; and yet when the thing signified has become to us a personal conviction, our intellectual apprehension of it attains a greater definiteness from the ability to express it in some succinct and lucid form of speech. Sir W. Hamilton of Edinburgh likened such terms in philosophy to fortresses built by an army at the limit of a territory through which they have advanced, so as to secure it as their own.[1] In theology also the illustration holds good. The phrases contain no new truth, but conveniently and helpfully register the truth attained.

In a similar manner, the propositions of a Creed will influence our thoughts. To take an instance from the Westminster Confession. Who that would express the deepest grounds of his convictions respecting the worth of the Bible could find a more appropriate form of words than in the following paragraph?—

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to a high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scrip-

[1] *Lectures on Logic*, vol. i. Lect. VIII. p. 138: 'Words are the fortresses of thought.'

ture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and Divine authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts.

Weighty words like these sum up the result of much thinking; they give clearness and fixedness to our own conceptions, and become authoritative from our inward response to their truth.

But when we pass from such considerations to estimate the claim of the Creed or Confession to be an absolute and final standard of our belief, some serious questions arise.

1. The Creed is, at the best, man's version of God's Word. And it is obvious to remark that this word has already been set before us in God's own way. The Bible is history, biography, poetry, reasoning;—ethics and theology in unelaborated form and with unnumbered applications to the circumstances of the hour—anything, in short, but

a Creed. May we not, in our studies, first and chiefly delight to pursue the course which God Himself has marked out for us? Are not our renderings of His truth likely to be inadequate, to miss something? For in Revelation infinite meanings lie. Creeds are necessarily limited; Scripture is inexhaustible. Creeds enclose a space; fenced in, it may be, with anathemas: and in order to fill it, they parcel out the Truth into formal propositions. Within the enclosure each dogma has its appointed place; but there are horizons beyond, to which these dogmas never reach. To whom, we may ask, has the right been given to select from the illimitable revelation these certain portions, to clothe them with the authority of Creed, and to leave the remainder outside? Beyond the charmed enclosure there may be truths as vital, as worthy to be formulated into dogma, as those appropriated by theologians. As a matter of fact, the omissions from many a Creed are fully as noteworthy as its contents. And when from the systematised arrangement of such formal documents we turn to the sayings of the Master, and to the words of His Apostles, we feel the difference at once. Illustrations may be given

from some cardinal articles of the Creed. Would we enter into the secret of the Most High, and apprehend the glory of the Eternal? First, the 'Apostles' Creed' shall help us :—

'I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.'

Then the Nicene Creed :—

'I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.'

Or again, the 'Athanasian Creed' :—

'The Catholic faith is this : that we worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance.'

Or the Augsburg Confession and the Thirty-nine Articles :—

'There is but One living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions ; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness ; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

Or the Westminster Confession :—

'There is but one only, living, and true God ;

who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure Spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; and withal most just and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.'

Now in all these several statements there is truth and value. Perhaps they may even help one's thoughts, as already noted. Follow them out to their results: interpret them in the light of Scripture, as for instance Bishop Pearson did long ago, with regard to the several clauses of the 'Apostles' Creed,' and they lead to great and glorious conceptions of the Divine. Yet in themselves do they admit the student of Scripture any the nearer to the mystery of the Eternal Godhead? You turn to the Bible; and as you read the words of Psalmist and of Prophet, or

listen to Jesus of Nazareth as He speaks of the Father in Heaven, you feel that you want no formulated Creed to tell you how to think of Him. The conception of God forms itself gradually, silently, ineffaceably within your mind; in truth and beauty, and in symmetry too; as when of old in Jerusalem the Temple arose in silent stateliness, while neither hammer nor axe was heard upon its walls. You need no definitions; or if you turn to analyse the definitions given, you are conscious of a want. The one phrase 'God is Love' is more than all the studied phrases of the Westminster Assembly; and the votary of Creed is only too apt to miss the crowning truth of the Divine Revelation, the universal Fatherhood of God.

And again: of Christ Himself we read in the Nicene formula, as 'the Only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, of one substance with the Father.' Majestic words! Yet how much more nearly does the Evangelist reach our soul! 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him;

and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life ; and the life was the light of men.' The Creed ties us down to phrases ; the Gospel lifts us to the Infinite, and brings as it were truth from heaven in its application to the needs and longings of the human heart.

It may be good for us to be taught by the Creeds what we are to find in Scripture ; but it is better to search that we may find it for ourselves.

Shall we then adopt the expedient, much in favour with some who, while maintaining the sole authority of Scripture, desiderate a Creed, of classifying Bible Texts under different headings, so as to present the whole as a syllabus of doctrine? There is much to commend the plan. The advantage of methodical arrangement seems to be thus happily combined with the recognition of the Divine Oracles as the supreme rule. Undoubtedly the words of Scripture, taken in their true meaning and legitimate application, are of highest value in the statement and confirmation of Truth.

Yet there are some considerations which tend to invalidate the process. For one thing, the selection cannot be in any wise complete. The text-creed

must be contained within comparatively narrow limits: where is the rest of the Bible? Every theologian will choose what appear to him the most significant passages; and it will be hard to escape the temptation to select those which appear to make for his own views, omitting those which would modify or correct them. For, a controversialist on almost any side may establish his case, if only allowed the choice and arrangement of his own texts. The truly significant thing is the interpretation which lies behind the mere words of the passage—an interpretation that may be subtly suggested by the heading under which the text is placed, or by the connection into which it is brought with other passages. Give me permission to make my own choice and collocation of texts; and without a word of comment I will undertake to prove the essential equality of the Son with the Father, and His essential inferiority; General or Particular Redemption, Resistible or Irresistible Grace; and so with every great theological question. Such misapplications are familiar to every Bible student. Volumes have been written on texts misquoted, misunderstood, and misapplied; and there is room for volumes to

come. 'This is My Body'; 'On this Rock I will build My Church'; 'He found no place for repentance'; 'Touch not, taste not, handle not.' Such misapplications are the source of all heresies, theological and ethical. Hardly too strong are the words of Shakespeare [1]:—

> In religion,
> What damnèd error, but some sober brow
> Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
> Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?

Almost the same may be said with regard to the 'proof texts' as used in Catechisms. I know that Catechisms so constructed are not in such repute as once they were. Perhaps the reason may be that the uncritical application of many passages has weakened confidence in the method. It is remarkable that of the early Socinian Catechisms written in Poland one constructs its answers entirely of Scripture passages, without note or comment. The comment, of course, is in the *questions* to which these answers are adjusted.

Take, again, as a different kind of illustration, the 'proofs' in the Westminster Assembly's Confession and Catechisms on the doctrine of the

[1] *Merchant of Venice*, act iii. sc. 2, ll. 77-80.

Holy Trinity, and on the Deity of Christ. On the Trinity, the first text adduced is 1 John v. 7, 'For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One.' This passage, which retains its place without any hint of its disputed genuineness, is now surrendered by scholars of every creed, and has disappeared from the Revised Version without even a line to show that it once occupied a place in the Received Text. Four passages, again, are quoted to prove the Deity and Incarnation of the Son. One is Rom. ix. 5, 'Of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever.' Here the translation is at least doubtful. The Revised Version cautiously and accurately states: 'Some modern interpreters place a full stop after *flesh*, and translate "He who is over all be (is) blessed for ever," or "He who is over all is God blessed for ever." Others punctuate, "concerning the flesh, who is over all. God be (is) blessed for ever."' Now it is plain that a passage which thus admits of six different translations can have, to say the least, but little polemical value. The second text is 1 Tim. iii. 16, 'God was manifest

in the flesh,' a reading now generally given up, although the critically-accredited phrase does, with proper explanation, support the doctrine in another way. It may be said, perhaps, that when the Confession was prepared, these facts of criticism were unknown. Precisely so ; and this only proves that the science of Bible exegesis and interpretation, like all that appertains to Theology, is progressive ; the conclusions of the past having to be revised with every increase of knowledge.

The instances given do but illustrate a method of quoting Scripture once very prevalent, still surviving in certain directions, but absolutely fatal to the true understanding either of the Bible or of Theology. Faithful criticism, sound exegesis, and honest interpretation would make havoc, not only of these 'Catechisms with proofs,' but of much religious literature besides—even occasionally of our sermons. So much the better for the cause of Truth. The Bible, in whole or in part, Old Testament and New, can bear to be rightly understood. It still possesses unexhausted, unsuspected wealth for those who will search aright. But every faculty must be summoned to the task, and help from every quarter be welcomed. What is

true? must be the incessant inquiry; not, What is traditional? or What seems to be edifying? Even the Higher Criticism, as it has been unfortunately called, which has been subjected, partly on account of that appellation, to so much undiscerning attack, must be pressed into service. We have to deal not only with isolated texts, but with books; we must, in order to understand them, inquire into their literary history, their connection with other books, their authorship and structure, their general purpose and meaning. Some among us are still apprehensive of such inquiries; and there can be no doubt that the method has often been recklessly applied. It is a great mistake to suppose that whatever is traditional must be true; but it is a mistake yet greater to assume that whatever is traditional is likely to be false. Such postulates on both sides must be renounced by the honest inquirer, who will proceed, not by denouncing the method, but by rigorously and fearlessly applying its canons. The arbitrary, conjectural, extravagant conclusions, such as characterise every unformed and progressive science, will be corrected; and the inspired volume, more profoundly understood, will become

to us and to our successors a brighter and more glorious book than to our fathers it had ever been.[1]

Once more: the Scriptures speak to all generations, the Creed is the voice of a single age. Every Creed or Confession reveals a crisis in the thoughts of men, when it was judged of supreme importance to affirm some one truth, or series of truths, singled out from the rest because comparatively forgotten or else specially assailed. The perspective of Truth continually changes. Now one doctrine, now another, will be in the foreground, according to the predominant tendencies of Christian thought. Many a doctrine becomes erroneous or misleading through being placed in a wrong connection with other doctrines. Then the controversies of an age account for the form of many of the Church's Creeds. They belong to periods of conflict, and the stamp of the time is upon them. Intended, it may be, in all good faith, for the culture of the spiritual life, their ploughshares, if I may adopt the prophet's image, were beaten out of swords, and their pruning-hooks out of spears; and in their structure

[1] See Appendix, Note 14: *The Inexhaustibility of Scripture.*

may be discerned, only too clearly, the gleam of the metal and the keenness of the blade. Thus, the very 'Apostles' Creed' was fashioned in part out of protests against Gnosticism; the Nicene Creed was mainly conditioned by the Arian heresy; the *Quicunque*, as we have seen, was directed, clause after clause, against differing forms of theosophical speculation; and the Creeds of the Reformation show that the different phases of the contest against Romanism were always in their framers' minds. Words and phrases in these documents often contain an implicit repudiation of error; thus in the Anglican Catechism: 'How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in His Church?' 'Two only' is the answer, the 'only' being an incidental protest against the seven sacraments of Romanism. The Article, again, on the Lord's Supper (xxviii.) is half of it controversial; while the reference to the Pelagians in the Ninth Article, 'Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk)'; the mention of 'the School-authors' in the Thirteenth, in repudiating the merit of Good Works; and that 'of certain Anabaptists' in the Thirty-eighth, on the Community of Goods,—are more direct dis-

avowals of doctrines held to be mistaken. Sometimes a Confession will even appear to go out of its way to negative a presumed heresy; as when we read in the Westminster Confession of Faith (ch. x. par. 4) that 'Men not professing the Christian religion cannot be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess; and to attest and maintain that they may, is very pernicious and to be detested.' This vehemence of expression seems to be directed against the opinion of Zwingli, which however was not embodied in any actual Creed, that even heathen, living uprightly and according to the law of nature and conscience, might obtain salvation.

Thus, as every age has its own special controversies and forms of unbelief, the protest on behalf of orthodoxy has inevitably taken different forms. Some of the declarations in ancient Creeds are now anachronisms; and any framer of present-day Confessions would have to direct his denials against altogether different antagonists. But it is evident that all this is of temporary service. A perfect Creed would hold itself independent of

changing moods of thought, and lay hold upon the eternal verity. While we are anathematising the Apollinarian heresy, or asserting the Double Procession of the Holy Ghost, men are asking whether Love and Law can be harmonised in the Divine administration, or whether the secret of a holy life is to be found in the Gospel of a free redemption, or whether the maintenance of Christian Theology leads to a true humanitarianism; with many another question prompted by the science and philosophy of our age. The dogmas of the ancient Creeds will hardly help us here; they keep us entangled amid questions and speculations which no longer engross the thoughts of men. The only solution of our present inquiries must be sought in the Living Word, open from age to age, with applications ever new and infinitely various to human needs; for God, who 'reveals Himself in many ways,' has a new and larger message for every generation to those who have eyes to discern and a heart to understand.

We, therefore, on the borders of the Twentieth Century, in very homage to the progressiveness of the Divine Self-revelation, decline to limit our-

selves by the formulas of the Fourth Century, or of the Eighth, or of the Seventeenth; assured that we too shall hear the voice that spoke to our fathers, and that the Spirit of Truth is ready as of old to lead His people into all the Truth.

For Theology, like every other Science, is progressive, and will sooner or later break its way through all formulas by the irresistible tendency of human thought. Only let us carefully bear in mind what we mean by progressiveness, and how far Theology differs in this respect from all other sciences. In general, science is progressive in two main respects—first, by the discovery of new material—new facts or phenomena, in the regions with which it has to do; and secondly, by more accurate methods of classifying and dealing with the material obtained. These two processes indeed, run up into each other; for, the wider the range of the phenomena observed, the larger will be the generalisations and the more complete the induction. But when we come to Theology, we have all the facts with which we have to deal already contained in the Scriptures of Truth. To these nothing can be added; we may indeed understand these materials better, arrange them

more symmetrically, argue from them more correctly; but the materials themselves are all given. Theological science, then, is progressive only in the second sense above indicated. Some would deny even this. Has not, they say, the Faith been once for all delivered to the saints? Is not Truth eternally the same? How can we advance beyond the thoughts of God as expressed to us in His own Word? We may answer—as it seems to me conclusively—that the question is not concerning the thoughts of God themselves, but concerning the thoughts of men in regard to them. Truth is essentially the same; but our apprehension of the truth admits of development and enlargement, as our point of view is changed and the proportion of things better discerned. The Faith once for all delivered to the saints was not delivered in a series of propositions ranged in scientific array, but successively, from age to age; by the disclosure of facts, the enunciation of principles, revelations concerning human life and the Divine dealings with mankind, in which we who study them may find ever new and deeper meanings, as we compare them one with another and place them under the cross-lights of human

experience, of science and philosophy. Every advance of thought brings some new help to their comprehension; and Theology becomes enriched with the spoils of the whole world of thought.

But the best proof that Theology is progressive is, that it has actually progressed. There never has been a halting-place at which the Church could rightly affirm: 'Hitherto we have attained —no further attainment is possible.' I know that the Churches have been saying this from time immemorial; but in spite of their protests 'the thoughts of men have widened with the process of the suns.' The mystery of Atonement was not the same to Calvin as it had been to the Gregories: why should we say that Calvin has settled it for ourselves and for all time? So with the great themes of Christian Apologetics. What was vindicated in the days of our forefathers was the Divine Government by Rewards and Punishments to be awarded in the Future Life. And this no doubt is still part of our conception; but I think that the greater stress is now laid upon the reality of Divine Sympathy with man. A 'State of Probation' was the old phrase, and this also contains a deep meaning; but deeper still is the view

of life as a Divine Education by the infinite forces of love.

In everything, indeed, which concerns men's thoughts of God, there is room for that larger knowledge which ever goes in hand with deeper reverence. The very first word of the Bible means more to us than it could have meant to our forefathers by whom the wonders of Creation were so largely unexplored; and our ever-growing knowledge of human history and experience gives new emphasis of application to Christ's own phrase, 'your Father which is in Heaven.'

And if I might venture to specify one direction in which the Christian thought of our day seems to be advancing to a new and higher truth than is expressed in any of the Creeds, I would instance the doctrine of the Incarnate and Risen Christ. The ancient Churches, in their developed 'Apostles' Creed,' laid the great stress upon His Manifestation to mankind; the Nicene and Constantinopolitan Fathers, in language coloured by Alexandrian philosophy, strove to set forth His Eternal Being, and His relation to the Father. In both, the central truth of Theology was recognised and dis-

played ; and their utterances have thus become a guide and help to the Churches through all time. In a measure we are coming back to these olden forms of truth, and are learning to understand, as perhaps our modern Churches have never yet understood, that it was by a true Divine instinct that the early theologians made Christ Himself, in His Divine-Human Personality, the centre of their Creeds. We are following in the same track, or at least beginning there. The Return to Christ, as Dr. Fairbairn has said, is the great characteristic of modern Theology.

But not altogether in the ancient metaphysical style. We are not content to think of Him simply as Only Begotten, *homoousios*, God of God, incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended to the Heavens. There is a tendency to linger on His Human Life, and to learn the secret of His teachings and His power there.

Undoubtedly this is sometimes done after too narrow and exclusive a method. Some recent representatives of Theology would bid us back to the Life and Words of Jesus upon earth, as though these contained the sum of all Theology. The Gospels, it is said, and not the Epistles, embody

the religion of Christ. Or, to borrow a succinct phrase from Jeremy Bentham—'Not Paul but Jesus.' The next step is easy. The Ethical, it is said, and not the Doctrinal, is all in all. 'The Sermon on the Mount is our Creed,' and 'in the Sermon on the Mount there is no Theology.' Now this latter assertion may be seriously questioned. Instead of there being no Theology in this discourse of Jesus, it is in reality marked by its theological fulness. For what is Theology but the Science of God? And the very aim and purpose of that Sermon was the Revelation of God. It was an announcement to the world of the Divine Fatherhood, surely the greatest of theological truths. Its ethical maxims were lifted into the higher sphere by being associated with this central verity: 'Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect.' Compare the words of our Lord with those of the best and greatest teachers of morality, and you feel that you are in another region, in contact with an altogether different order of thought. The secret of the difference is that His doctrine is penetrated through and through with Theology: God Himself is in it all. And so with His whole teaching.

It would indeed be correct to say that there are doctrines which were not as yet explicitly propounded. Did not the Master Himself declare at the close: 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now?'[1] Salvation, with Him, was a work to be wrought rather than a message to be given; and the message was entrusted to His disciples. They were to interpret His deepest Will, and to proclaim the Gospel of the Resurrection.

This Gospel is far-reaching, and the Creeds all fall short of declaring it in its adaptation to modern thought. They tell us of the Son of God who was before all worlds, of His Incarnation and earthly life, His death, His rising from the dead, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His promise to return hereafter; but we do not discern in all this the truth of truths, that Christ is living now, not only on His distant throne in Heaven, but as the very Life of the world.

This is the great truth which the Apostles were set to enforce, to carry on the thoughts of the faithful from those sublime and tender memories

[1] John xvi. 12.

which associated themselves with Olivet and Galilee, with the Mount of Beatitudes and the Mount of Transfiguration, to another and yet higher fellowship with Him who from His very absence was nearer to their souls than in His earthly life He had ever been. This was the reason of the continued insistence, in Paul's later Epistles, upon the Resurrection. 'It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead'—the supreme fact, the fact that gave meaning and power to all besides. True, the fact was many-sided. It was evidence, clear, irresistible, of His mission and claims; it was confirmation of His sacrifice accepted for the sins of men; but beyond all this, in the Apostle's meaning, it was restoration, the great gift to the Church of a living Redeemer. This is hardly hinted in the Creeds, even in those which are most occupied with details and analysis of His saving work; it is too much absent, also, from popular preaching. We think of Christ as far away, on His distant throne, to come one day in visible majesty to the Church that mourns His absence and to the world which sighs to be renewed: we scarcely apprehend the fact that He is verily in the midst of us; that

already the throne is set above all earthly thrones; that He guides, invisibly but surely, the whole course of the world's history; that He lives and reigns, and that—to use the magnificent imagery of the Apocalypse—His faithful disciples and the martyrs for His cause are living and reigning with Him as the 'thousand years' roll on.[1] This is Christ's Kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven: Christ in the world as well as Christ for the world—the Church's joy and hope.

And here, let me say, we may understand some of the strangest superstitions that have ever drawn devout souls astray. Every error that has cast its shadow over Christendom is the distorted image of a truth; and the dim conviction of Christ's presence in His Church, apprehended by minds only half emancipated from carnal associations and conceptions, led by degrees to the figment of a bodily presence, localised in the Eucharistic emblems, wheresoever two or three were gathered together to remember Him. It was, and is, a strange perversion of the truth; but it is a perversion only. The mediæval philosophy invoked in support of the theory is but an afterthought;

[1] See Rev. xx. 4, 5.

the theory did not spring from it, nor was it based upon a childish misunderstanding of our Lord's words, 'This is My Body.' Not thus could it have taken possession of so many of the keenest, strongest minds in successive generations. No; there was a conviction, as true as it was deep, that Christ was with His Church in His glorified Humanity; and from that profound conviction it was but a single step to the dream of a Presence localised under visible and palpable forms. In our emphatic repudiation of the doctrine, we do well to remember that the Real Presence, rightly apprehended, is one of the sublimest doctrines of the Christian Creed—a Presence all the more real because spiritual, the more intensely true because discerned by Faith alone. So do we reconcile the thought of an ever-present with that of an absent Saviour.

The poet is sometimes wiser, sees more into the heart of things, than the theologian; and I know not where to find a more impressive contrast between the spirit of modern scepticism and the spirit of modern faith than in some verses which I will read to you—first from Matthew Arnold, who thus pathetically mourns the vanish-

ing of the living Christ from his soul's horizon. He is speaking of the 'Ages of Faith':—

Oh, had I lived in that great day,
How had its glory new
Filled earth and heaven, and caught away
My ravished spirit too!
No thoughts that to the world belong
Had stood against the wave
Of love which set so deep and strong
From Christ's then open grave!
No lonely life had passed too slow,
When I could hourly scan
Upon His Cross, with head sunk low
That nailed, thorn-crownèd Man!—
Could see the Mother with her Child
Whose tender winning arts
Have to His little arms beguiled
So many wounded hearts!
And centuries came and ran their course,
And—unspent all that time—
Still, still went forth that Child's dear force,
And still was at its prime.
Ay, ages long endured His span
Of life—'tis true received—
That Gracious Child, that thorn-crowned Man!
—He lived while we believed.
While we believed, on earth He went,
And open stood His grave.
Men called from chamber, church, and tent,
And Christ was by to save.

Now He is dead! Far hence He lies
In the lorn Syrian town;
And on His grave, with shining eyes,
The Syrian stars look down.
In vain men still, with hoping new
Regard His death-place dumb,
And say the stone is not yet to,
And wait for words to come.

But the words are unspoken. The Christ comes not. The Child, the Sufferer, has vanished. And, in the deep words of the Apostle, to 'know Christ after the flesh' has proved insufficient to meet the wants of the world.

Listen now to another poet—the American Whittier:—

Nor Holy Bread, nor blood of grape,
The lineaments restore
Of Him we know in outward shape,
And in the flesh no more!
He cometh not a King to reign;
The world's long hope is dim;
The weary centuries watch in vain
The clouds of Heaven for Him.
But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He:
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.
Our Lord, and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,

We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.
To Thee our full humanity,
Its joys and pains, belong:
The wrong of man to man on Thee
Inflicts a deeper wrong.
Who hates, hates Thee; who loves becomes
Therein to Thee allied:
All sweet accord of hearts and homes
In Thee are multiplied.
Deep strike Thy roots, O Heavenly Vine,
Within our earthly sod:
Most Human and yet most Divine,
The flower of man and God!

Now it can hardly fail to have struck you that in the former of those two poems the vision of Christ had been simply of the outward—very beautiful and pathetic, but still not passing beyond the region of sentiment. 'That Gracious Child, that thorn-crowned Man,' has afforded no hint of any deeper revelation. The sympathies are aroused, the sense of beauty is awakened; but, like many a peasant who crosses himself by the wayside Madonna or crucifix, the traveller goes his way; and in earth's common paths the vision by and by is lost. The Christ who is to win all human spirits and to transform the world is to

be apprehended and known after another fashion than this.

'God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,' is the very life of the Christian Creed. And, although indeed it would be hazardous to prophesy concerning the progress of human thought, either in the world or in the Church, there are signs, too clear to be overlooked, that the Incarnation is growingly viewed as a fact that is grounded in the very nature of God and man, independently of human sin. The question was of old debated in the Schools, among other topics of speculative curiosity, Whether the Son of God would have become man, if man had not transgressed. Nothing came of the discussion, carried on as it was in the hard scholastic way; but the question is now revived under other conditions. Among modern divines who regard the Incarnation as manifesting an eternal purpose apart from human sinfulness, may be mentioned Dr. Dorner, the author of the *History of the Doctrine regarding the Person of Christ*, as well as the learned and profound Bishop Martensen; while, of living British theologians who take the same view, it will suffice

to mention the names of Bishop Westcott and Dr. Fairbairn. The question must largely affect the Christology of the future, touching as it does the entire relation between God and man, who was created in His image, and whose highest affinity is therefore with the Divine. In any case, it is believed, humanity awaited its true crown in the Revelation of God in man, inseparably joined. The Advent, therefore, was no afterthought in the counsels of God, as perhaps we have been in the habit of assuming. I have already quoted from two poets of the day, and may be allowed to refer to one of the past, who in this respect seems to have missed the mark, while his representation has unconsciously influenced many minds. It is Milton, who has interpreted for us so many of the great thoughts of Puritanism, and who has in so many instances imposed his own theology upon the Churches. In one of his most daring imaginative flights, he carries us up to the courts of Heaven, and to a Council held there over the sin and fall of man. The lines that follow were a favourite quotation in the pulpit a generation ago:—

> 'Die he or Justice must; unless for him
> Some other, able, and as willing, pay

The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, Heavenly Powers, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just, the unjust to save?
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?'
He asked, but all the Heavenly Choir stood mute,
And silence was in Heaven!

Then, after that awful pause, the Son of God undertook the mission of Salvation, 'offered Himself to die for Man's offence,' and all Heaven burst forth in song[1]:—

O unexampled love!
Love nowhere to be found less than Divine!

No wonder that a great Father of the Church, holding a similar view centuries before, should have exclaimed, even in view of the Fall, 'O felix culpa!' O happy transgression, which led to such a crowning wonder as the Incarnation of the Eternal Word! But I think the wonder is even greater, and the love is not the less, when we look upon the 'taking of the Manhood into God' as the purpose of the Creation from the beginning. In the words of Bishop Westcott: 'The Fall—and here lies the greatest mystery of Divine Love—did not frustrate this end, which it might seem to

[1] *Paradise Lost*, iii. 210-218; 410, 411.

have made unattainable consistently with truth and justice. The circumstances of the Incarnation were due to Sin, while the idea of the Incarnation was due to the primal and absolute purpose of love foreshadowed in Creation.'

Such thoughts, it may be anticipated, will occupy the theologians of the future, not as barren speculations or curious fancies, but as opening up a way to the deeper understanding both of God and man. One thing is certain. The Christ of God is the centre of the Christian Creed, as of the renewed life. It is good for us to be conversant with great ideals: they uplift us in thought and aspiration even when we cannot wholly realise them; and surely the great ideal of Humanity created in the image of God is to be found in Christ, Himself described, in the self-same words, as 'the image of the invisible God'—the only perfect revelation of what man was intended to be, what the Great Salvation sets him free to become, and what he shall be in Christ for evermore.

LECTURE VI

ON SUBSCRIPTION TO ARTICLES OF FAITH

THE history of Subscription to Articles of Faith begins, naturally enough, with the mandate of an Emperor. It was the expedient of Constantine, who required from every member of the Nicene Council an attestation under his own hand to the decrees of that assembly. The rough, imperious soldier did but act according to his light. He had proved that in the State the essentials of peace were order and submission; why should it not be so in the Church? Thought as well as conduct was to be put under control, and beliefs were to be regulated by the word of command.

Here, however, at the same time, we note the beginnings of evasion in creed-signature. When banishment, or worse, was the penalty for withholding one's name, there were only too likely to

be some dissemblers. Three of the bishops, it is said by the historian Philostorgius, who complied with the injunction of Constantine against their convictions, attempted to satisfy their consciences by dexterously inserting an *iota* in the copies that they signed, so turning *homoousion* to *homoiousion*.[1] In fact, the requirement of signature was but the beginning of difficulties, and an evil precedent for days to come.

Yet it must be noted that, both in the Nicene and subsequent Councils, Subscription appears to have been limited to the actual members of the assembly. The mandate was not extended to the teachers and rulers of the Church in general, these being simply required to conform. Obedience, not assent, was the demand laid upon them. The distinction is important. The decrees of the Council went forth as the infallible word of the Holy Ghost, and demanded implicit obedience. So, as Dean Stanley has shown, in mediæval times,

[1] *Epitome*, by Photius, bk. i. c. 9. The bishops mentioned are Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicæa, and Maris of Chalcedon. See also Socrates, *Eccl. Hist.* bk. i. c. 8. Two others (Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais) rejected the *homoousion*. Sozomen, lib. ii. c. 21, does not mention the *iota*, but says that Eusebius and Theognis bribed the notary to efface their signatures. The whole account is confused and suspicious.

as a general rule, 'the unity of the Church was preserved, like the unity of the State, not by preliminary promises or oaths, but by the general laws of discipline and order, and by the general public sentiment of the whole community.'

In like manner the Church of Rome and the different Protestant communions take entirely different positions with regard to Subscription. The one demand of Rome is the acceptance of the Church's authority. Then whatever the Church enjoins is to be believed and taught. The preliminary act of assent involves the whole. There is no question of this or that particular article of belief; the submission may, in fact, be made without knowing what these articles are. We have seen in our own time how the dogma, for instance, of Papal Infallibility, strongly opposed by many eminent Romanists until decreed by the Vatican Council, was then at once accepted and maintained by the same persons—not because their arguments had been refuted or their reason convinced, but because Rome had spoken. They henceforth believed, as one may believe in some article of unexpected information. It had seemed unlikely up to the point of confirmation, but when

stated as authentic it was received without any further question.

Now Protestantism cannot understand this method of dealing with beliefs. It cannot accept its convictions on authority and in the mass, nor can it yield implicit assent to unexpressed dogmas. The Protestant must know what he believes, and must subscribe the dogmas, if he subscribes at all, on their own several merits. In such a spirit the early Protestant Churches proceeded; and the Reformation age, as we have seen, became fertile in Confessions, the very differences in which became evidences of independent judgment. No doubt the requirement of Subscription as sometimes enforced led to even greater difficulties than the Roman method had done. It had been a comparatively simple thing to accept the Church with all its dogmas as a whole, but now, when assent was demanded to a large number of propositions —and some of these Confessions were very long! —on their own separate evidence and authority, the intellectual process was not so easy. The Rulers, who took the matter in hand, and enforced the Confession as a State religion, did not always understand this, and led their subjects into some

strange absurdities. Thus Duke Julius of Brunswick (1568-89), in his zeal for the Evangelical Faith, 'required from all clergy, from all professors, from all magistrates, a Subscription to all and everything contained in the Confession of Augsburg, in the Apology for the Confession, in the Schmalkaldic Articles, in all the works of Luther, in all the works of Melanchthon, and in all the works of Chemnitz.'[1]

Such, however, were but the eccentricities of Erastianism. More to our purpose is it to note the law of Subscription as enacted at different times in Great Britain.[2] It underwent many fluctuations: the conviction of rulers in Church and State appearing ineradicable, that the way to ecclesiastical union was by the demand of signature. Make men but say, I believe, and set their hands to it, and all would go well!

The first proposal of Subscription in the English Protestant Church seems to have been due to Cranmer, who was greatly influenced in this by the Swiss reformers. The Archbishop in 1552 wrote a letter to the Council of King Edward VI.,

[1] Letter to Bishop Tait 'On Subscription': Stanley, *Essays on Church and State*, p. 128.

[2] See *Edinburgh Review*, April 1862.

referring to the Forty-two Articles then newly drawn up, and 'beseeching their Lordships to be meanes unto the King's Majestie that all the Bishops may have authority from hym to cause all their preachers, archdeacons, deanes, prebendaries, parsons, vicars, curates, with all their clergy to subscribe to the said Articles.'[1] Accordingly, in June 1553, a royal letter was addressed to the bishops, enjoining, as had been requested, the enforcement of Subscription upon the clergy.

It was no doubt felt to be necessary in some decisive way to mark the separation between the Romanists and the adherents of the Reformation. The proposal was, that all clergy refusing to sign were to be deprived of their preferments; but that before proceeding to this extremity the Bishop was to use every means of persuasion; first, as the King's letter enjoins, conferring with the candidate for ordination or any ecclesiastical appointment on every one of the Articles. 'And yet,' it is added, 'if any party refuse to subscribe any of these Articles for lack of learning, or of knowledge of the truth thereof, ye shall in anywise by teaching, conference, and proof of the same by the

[1] Strype, *Life of Cranmer*, Appendix lxiv.

Scriptures, reasonably and discreetly move and persuade him thereto, before ye shall peremptorily judge him as unable and a recusant. And for the trial of his conformity ye shall, according to your discretions, prefix him a time and space convenient to deliberate and give his consent; so it be betwixt three weeks and six weeks from the time of his first access unto you. And if after six weeks he will not consent and agree willingly to subscribe, then ye may and lawfully shall in any wise refuse to admit or enable him.'[1]

The King, however, died before this mandate could be enforced; and the whole matter remained in suspense until Elizabeth was firmly established upon the throne. We have already noted the revision of the Articles in her reign, and their reduction to Thirty-nine—the form in which we have them now. It was in 1571 that the 'Act for the Ministers of the Church to be of sound Religion' for the first time enforced Subscription;[2] and the requirement has ever since been part of the law of the Church of England. This was, however, made much more stringent by the Acts

[1] Strype, *Eccl. Mem.* Edward VI. bk. xi. c. 22.

[2] See Lecture IV. p. 131. The Act is printed in Gee and Hardy's *Documents*, pp. 477-480.

of Uniformity in 1662, the words of declaration being :—

'I, A. B., do declare my unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the book entitled, "The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the Use of the Church of England."'

To the Articles, the form of subscription ran thus :—

'I do willingly and from my heart (*ex animo*) subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the United Church of England and Ireland, and to the Three Articles of the Thirty-sixth Canon, and to all things contained in them.' The Second Article of the Thirty-sixth Canon asserts that the Book of Common Prayer 'containeth in it nothing contrary to the Word of God.'

When the Toleration Act was passed (1689), and Dissenters were allowed, under certain restrictions, to exercise their ministry, one of these restrictions was the requirement of subscription to all the Church Articles excepting the Thirty-fourth, on Church Tradition, the Thirty-fifth, on the Book

of Homilies, the Thirty-sixth, on the Consecration of Bishops and Ministers; with the words in the Twentieth, 'the Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith'; also, in the case of the Baptists, that part of the Twenty-seventh which relates to Infant Baptism. But ninety years afterwards, in 1779, the requirement of signature to the Articles by Nonconformists was entirely swept away.

Meanwhile the unlimited assent required from the clergy was increasingly felt as a burden upon Conscience. So long since as 1708 Bishop Burnet wrote, in concluding the *History of his Own Times*:—

> The requiring subscriptions to the Thirty-nine Articles is a great imposition. I believe them all myself; but as those about Original Sin and Predestination might be expressed more unexceptionally, so I think it is a better way to let such matters continue to be still the standard of doctrine, and to censure those who teach any contrary tenets than to oblige all who serve in the Church to subscribe them. The greater part subscribe without ever examining them, and others do it because they must do it, though they can hardly satisfy their consciences about some things in them. Churches and Societies are much better secured by laws than by subscriptions: it is a more reasonable as well as a more easy method of government.

Such convictions from time to time gathered strength in the Church of England. But ecclesiastical bodies move slowly, and when at last they do move, they are apt to rest in compromise. So it was not until 1865 that, after long and bitter discussion, the subscription of the clergy was reduced to the more simple yet sufficiently stringent formula :—

'I, A. B., do solemnly make the following declaration :—

'I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion and to the Book of Common Prayer, and of the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. I believe the Doctrine of the United Church of England and Ireland, as therein set forth, to be agreeable to the Word of God ; and in public prayer and administration of the Sacraments I will use the form in the said book prescribed and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority.'

This, it will be seen, is a general assent, and leaves the way open for a certain latitude of opinion within the limits of a substantial agreement.

So with other Christian bodies. The Presby-

terian subscription is indeed in form more rigid. 'I, subscribing this with my own hand, do hereby declare that I do sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, as approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1647, to be the truths of God; and I do own the same as the Confession of my Faith. As likewise I do own the purity of worship presently authorised and practised in this Church, and also the Presbyterian government and discipline thereof; which doctrine, worship, and Church government I am persuaded are founded upon the Word of God and agreeable thereto.'

In addition to this avowal of belief, the United Presbyterian ministers on their ordination declare that they 'express no approbation of anything in the Confession and Catechisms which teaches, or may be supposed to teach, compulsory or persecuting or intolerant principles in religion.' The English Presbyterian Church, in the year 1890, adopted a series of Articles, twenty-four in number, a modernised, abbreviated, and mitigated form of the Westminster Confession, well meriting study, as the most unexceptionable form in which mod-

erate Calvinism has as yet been embodied within the same compass.[1]

The Wesleyan Connexion, or Church as it is now generally termed, takes as its standard the doctrinal Articles of the Church of England, with a general assent to the teachings of Mr. Wesley's *Sermons* and his *Notes on the Scriptures.*

The Congregational Union, in presenting a lucid and compendious statement of principles, very much on the lines of the old Protestant Confessions,[2] not only refrains from imposing any Subscription, but expressly adds :—

> It is not intended that the following statement should be put forth with any authority, or as a standard to which assent should be required.
>
> Disallowing the authority of Creeds and Articles of Religion as a bond of union, and protesting against subscription to any human formularies as a term of Communion, Congregationalists are yet willing to declare, for general information, what is commonly believed among them, reserving to every one the most perfect liberty of conscience.

So lately, however, as the year 1878, it was thought necessary, in view of certain theological

[1] See Appendix, Note 15 : *Articles of the Presbyterian Church of England*, 1890.

[2] See Appendix, Note 16 : *Declaration of Faith of the Congregational or Independent Dissenters*, 1833.

discussions in the body, to pass an additional resolution, very carefully prepared, chiefly historical, and somewhat vague, as will be seen :—

That in view of the uneasiness produced in the Churches of the Congregational order by the proceedings of a recent Conference (at Leicester) on the terms of religious Communion, the Assembly feels called upon to reaffirm that the primary object of the Congregational Union is, according to the terms of its own constitution, to uphold and extend Evangelical Religion. That the Assembly appeals to the history of the Congregational Churches generally, as evidence that the Congregationalists have always regarded the acceptance of the facts and doctrines of the Evangelical Faith revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as an essential condition of Religious Communion in Congregational Churches ; and that among these have always been included the Incarnation, the Atoning Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, His Resurrection, His Ascension and Mediatorial Reign, and the Work of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of Man. That the Congregational Union was established on the basis of these facts and doctrines is, in the judgment of this Assembly, made evident by the Declarations of Faith and Order adopted at the Annual Meeting in 1833 ; and the Assembly believes that the Churches represented in this Union hold these facts and doctrines in their integrity to this day.

The Baptist Union prints no Confession of Faith, simply declaring among the Articles of its Constitution : ' In this Union it is fully recognised

that every separate Church is at liberty to interpret and administer the laws of Christ, and that the immersion of believers is the only Christian Baptism.'

In the year 1888, however, the denomination was agitated by a controversy as to the imposition of more stringent terms of fellowship. The outcome was a declaration that the ultimate basis of union was not a common creed but a renewed life.

The preamble to this Declaration is especially to be noted :—

> Whilst expressly disavowing and disallowing any power to control belief or to restrict inquiry, yet, in view of the uneasiness produced in the Churches by recent discussions, and to show our agreement with one another and with our fellow-Christians on the great truths of the Gospel, the Council deem it right to say that :—
>
> Baptized into the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we have avowed Repentance towards God and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—the very elements of a new life ; as in the Supper we avow our union with one another, while partaking of the symbol of the Body of our Lord broken for us, and of the Blood shed for the remission of sins. The Union, therefore, is an Association of Churches and Ministers professing not only to believe the facts and doctrines of the Gospel, but to have undergone the spiritual change expressed or implied in them. This change is the fundamental principle of our Church life.

Then follows a statement of certain facts and doctrines as 'commonly believed' in the Churches of the Union.

1. The Divine Inspiration and Authority of the Holy Scripture as the supreme and sufficient rule of our faith and practice, and the right and duty of individual judgment in the interpretation of it.

2. The fallen and sinful state of man.

3. The Deity, the Incarnation, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His Sacrificial and Mediatorial Work.

4. Justification by Faith—a faith that works by love and produces holiness.

5. The work of the Holy Spirit in the Conversion of Sinners, and in the Sanctification of all who believe.

6. The Resurrection; the Judgment of the last day, according to the words of our Lord in Matthew xxv. 46.

To this last Article a note is appended to the following effect:—

It should be stated as an historical fact that there have been brethren in the Union working cordially with it, who, while reverently bowing to the authority of Holy Scripture, and rejecting the dogmas of Purgatory and Universalism, have not held the common interpretation of the words of our Lord.

I confess to a strong wish that the whole statement had ended with the first paragraph. To take a simple and decided stand on our Church

life and ordinances as meaning nothing less than conversion to God, with mutual fellowship as the result and expression of this spiritual change, would have clearly indicated our position, and would have needed no reinforcement of Articles to follow—which, after all, are not Articles but only heads of doctrine, put, as in those of the Congregational Assembly, in an historical way, and susceptible of boundless variety of interpretation.

Then, you have no doubt observed that in the manifestoes of both denominations the reason for issuing them has been based upon a certain prevalent 'uneasiness.' I do not know that this uneasiness has been removed or prevented by these documents. In fact, it strikes me that such uneasiness will always exist as long as there are the old and the young. While the world lasts, I suppose, those who seem to be going too fast and too far in their inquiries will be a burden to those who would stand on the old ways: elders are too apt to forget that they once were young, nor do the young always bear in mind that they will some day be old themselves. So the heterodoxies of one generation often become the orthodoxies of the next, and meanwhile, in every changing

form and mode of expression, the Eternal Truth endures.

But the main lesson of the incidents recounted, so far as concerns our present subject, is that both Baptist and Congregational Unions have shown themselves firm in rejecting all propositions for requiring subscription to a creed. The historical statements as to points or heads of belief generally accepted may go for what they are worth; the main point, I repeat, is in the Baptist declaration of the Church idea—as that of a company of renewed persons, and therefore under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. In effect, the declaration means: We can trust the Spirit of God.

To this point I shall return; but meanwhile pass on to notice one other attempt to supply the place of a credal test, in a Society formed a little more than half a century since, professing the high and even sublime purpose of manifesting the unity of Christian believers. It might indeed be asked whether this is not the function of the Church itself, and whether the institution of a separate Society to undertake the task is not one of the most humiliating confessions of failure ever made through the long ages of ecclesiastical history. But let

this pass. The Society—'Evangelical Alliance' as it is called—at its inception propounded Eight Articles, which, as they are fairly brief, may be given here. They are :—

1. The Divine Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.

2. The right and duty of Private Judgment in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

3. The Unity of the Godhead and the Trinity of Persons therein.

4. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the Fall.

5. The Incarnation of the Son of God, His work of Atonement for sinners of mankind, and His Mediatorial intercession and reign.

6. The Justification of the sinner by Faith alone.

7. The work of the Holy Spirit in the Conversion and Sanctification of the sinner.

8. The Divine institution of the Christian Ministry, and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

To these Eight Articles was afterwards added a ninth :—

The Immortality of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Body, the Judgment of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Eternal Blessedness of the righteous and the Eternal Punishment of the wicked.

It will be seen at once that, as in the case

already cited, these are not dogmas, so much as titles or headings of dogmas ; also susceptible of very various interpretation. But the most significant thing in the proposal of these Articles was the manner in which they were set forth :—

'The parties composing this Alliance,' say the promoters, 'shall be such persons only as hold and maintain what are usually understood to be evangelical views in regard to the matters of doctrine understated.'

And again at the close :—

'This brief Summary is not to be regarded in any formal or ecclesiastical sense as a Creed or Confession, nor the adoption of it as involving an assumption of the right authoritatively to define the limits of Christian brotherhood, but simply as an indication of the class of persons whom it is desirable to embrace within the Alliance.'

'The class of persons whom it is desirable' to include! Then the Alliance at its outset renounces the idea of manifesting the unity of *all* believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Some, no doubt, it has been found very 'desirable to include'; and they have undeniably worked together well, and for many admirable purposes. Only this

thing they have not done—they have not manifested the unity of all believers; those, for instance, in the Society of Friends. And further, what is the test applied? That they hold certain well-defined doctrines? No; but 'what are usually understood to be evangelical views in regard to them.' Usual understanding is very indefinite, may change from age to age, and can scarcely be a guide or help to religious thought!

Now these facts are instanced simply as illustrations of the difficulties which beset every human endeavour to frame a lasting intellectual groundwork for Christian orthodoxy. To love God, to repent of sin, to trust the Divine Redeemer, and to live in charity with all men, one would think, were a sufficient basis for any true Evangelical Alliance. Only it might be hard to formulate these things in a creed. And so we must fall back upon 'the persons whom it is desirable to include' within a narrower circle than that of the great and holy fellowship, the universal Church of the redeemed.

The bearing of these considerations upon Church life and order, both in the present and in

the future, must be reserved for the next Lecture. One practical question, however, presses. Whatever may be the requirement in regard to simple Church membership, it is held by many that a subscription to a Creed or Confession may at any rate be required from the officers, and especially from the teachers, of the Christian community. So in the State enactments that we have been noticing, the obligation is imposed, principally, almost entirely, upon the clergy. Now there is undoubtedly a certain convenience in having a standard to which their instructions may readily be brought, so that those who are entrusted with their appointment may know how they interpret the Divine oracles, and what they hold as the chief doctrines of the Faith. Congregations have their rights as well as Ministers, and will be wise in desiring to know what will be the essentials of pastoral teaching. That the Ministers, therefore, should be prepared to say beforehand: 'These Thirty-nine Articles,' or 'This Westminster Confession,' or 'This Doctrinal Trust-Deed, contains the lines of truth on which I intend to proceed,' is an advantage to which we cannot be blind. Is not such definite pledge, it is often asked, better

than the profession of a vague, undogmatic theology, which may leave the Christian teacher to wander at large and unchecked into any fields of thought, without any documentary provision for testing his orthodoxy? The proposal to leave him free to ascertain and declare the truth for himself, without the imposition of a human creed, is often represented as a plea for indefiniteness in belief, a religiousness without systematic form; as though the only alternative lay between this and recognised authoritative formula. Hence the charge continually levelled against those who object to creed-subscription, of superficiality and indifference to clear, well-defined, religious truth.

It may be replied, in the first place, that the real alternative is not as alleged. The renunciation of human creeds does not imply indifference to religious truth; only a conviction as to the source where that truth must be sought and learned. As was maintained in the First Lecture of this course, it is of supreme importance to the intellectual and spiritual life that the Divine testimony should be received in its fulness, diligently pondered, distinctly understood. The age more than ever needs that the teachers of the Church should

be theologians, — well-informed, clear-minded, strong in the faith. The very life of the Church is bound up with such thoughts as are expressed by the terms Incarnation, Atonement, Resurrection. We only say that for their adequate apprehension there is a more excellent way than the way of authoritative imposition of human Creeds.

For, secondly. Every true teacher must form his own creed. The responsibility is his, and cannot be either evaded or shared. 'Why,' it may be asked, 'may I not be content to accept the interpretations which wise and good men have put upon the Divine Oracles, and thus submit to the authority of the Church?' It might be rejoined, 'To which of the Churches? Let me clearly understand what I am about. Am I accepting this as a condition of membership in the Church Universal, or only in some special Christian community? If the latter, I must first at any rate exercise choice as to the master to be followed.' But, again, the submission is forbidden by the free spirit of Christianity. I repeat—we as Protestants cannot first accept a Church and then its teachings. The Articles of our belief must be received on their own several authority.

Merely to say of one or another point, 'I can accept it because I find it in the Creed,' is to do violence to the imperative claims of truth. The language of the faithful heart will be, not, 'I can accept,' but, 'I believe'—the noblest utterance that the enlightened intellect can make. 'I believe, not with otiose assent, nor in the spirit of mere compliance, but because I have found it so, and it is true.' Now to attain such assured, triumphant belief, the thoughts of other men will be very serviceable, especially such thoughts as have been incorporated, with much care and studious inquiry into the will of God, in the Creeds and Confessions of the Church. These therefore should be diligently studied, but independently. A man's true and guiding light will come from what God has taught in the volume of inspiration and in His own voice within the soul.

Thirdly. While it is fully admitted that a Christian congregation has a right to know what are the beliefs of its teacher, it may be added that this information can be given in far more effective ways than by the imposition of a formula. The man is more to be trusted who independently declares the truth that is in him through the many

channels open to him for communication with his people, than the man who is expected to shape his teaching by the preliminary Creed. In this matter we need self-respecting congregations and self-respecting ministers:—'I believe and therefore speak': 'I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say.' Happy the congregation whose minister sometimes sets them thinking by the presentation of unfamiliar forms of truth! Happy the minister whose word is not always taken on trust by a too-confiding people! It is thus that spiritual education will be advanced, and true progress made in the acquisition of a liberal and truly orthodox theology.

At the same time there are undoubted limits to divergence. A certain harmony in the great essentials of the Faith is presupposed in the relations between pastor and people. No hard and fast rule can here, I apprehend, be laid down. A mutual understanding from the first will in general prevent all difficulty; and the practice among us —in our services of 'ordination,' 'designation,' or 'recognition,' whatever they may be called—of receiving from the minister a statement of his main beliefs, is both useful and instructive, provided

only that such statement be made on the ground of personal conviction, and of unfeigned readiness to welcome all further light from the Spirit and Word of God.

Fourthly. The ambiguities of language make subscription unsatisfactory, especially when the Creed to be signed descends from another age or a different epoch in the history of thought. The Bible is for all time, not so the Confession. In subscribing the latter, I am binding myself to accept the exposition of men who in many respects did not think as I do, whose outlook upon the world was different, whose psychology and metaphysics belonged to their own age. So the very terms in which they generalised the teaching of Scripture have insensibly changed their significance. 'Such terms'—and here I am quoting from Max Müller—'as Nature, Law, Freedom, Necessity, Body, Substance, Matter, Church, State, Revelation, Inspiration, Knowledge, Belief, are tossed about in the war of words as if everybody knew what they meant, and as if everybody used them exactly in the same sense. Words without definite meaning are at the bottom of nearly all our philosophical and religious contro-

versies. But as such words stand in the old formulas, a certain halo of sanctity environs them; we adopt them as a matter of course, and sometimes, when pressed for explanation, are startled to find how little we know of their significance.' John Foster, writing on the *Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion*—a truly noble Essay, which I fear the present generation hardly finds time to read—contends very strongly against many of our current theological technicalities, and urges the importance of setting forth religious truths, so far as may be, in ordinary language. Fully admitting the value of technical terms when rightly and carefully defined, he points out that in the lapse of time and changes of thought they 'may cease to mean what they were once defined to mean. The peculiar words may remain,' he adds, 'when the ideas which they were intended to perpetuate are gone. Thus instead of being the signs of those ideas, they become their monuments, and monuments profaned into abodes for the living enemies of the departed.'

Fifthly. The system of Subscription is beset with temptations to evasion and insincerity. The pitfalls lie at every step. It is so easy for a man to say more than he means, or what he does not

quite mean, or what he has not yet thoroughly weighed! He may, in a manner, anticipate his own mental growth, and give his attestation in the hope that increase of knowledge will deepen his present faint convictions. In other sciences foregone conclusions are of little worth; in Theology only they are demanded as a condition of advance. There have been few more lamentable absurdities, from the Protestant point of view, than the old requirement from all Oxford undergraduates at their matriculation to sign the Thirty-nine Articles. It was absolutely and evidently impossible that these candidates for an academical education could have accepted or even understood the document presented for their adhesion, yet the requirement was long stoutly defended, as essential to the wellbeing of the Church and to the Christian training of its *alumni*. In fact, it was not abolished until the year 1854; and though probably no one would now be found to vindicate such an enactment, the fact that it was once zealously upheld only too plainly shows how far removed the signature to theological Articles was held to be from a sincere, intelligent, and personal acceptance of their contents.

But the main question is not respecting undergraduates, or their now exploded obligations. The difficulty remains, in the case of those who are still required to subscribe as a condition of office in the Church; and, in the progress of theological science and the changed forms of human thought, it is an ever-recurring problem how far Subscription to a Creed, a Confession, a series of Articles —whatever it may be—shall be taken to imply the *ex animo* acceptance of its several particulars. The Ethics of Subscription, indeed, have been a branch of casuistical science. In the Church of England, when the Subscription remained in the old form, the strain upon intellect and conscience was often very painful. Yet at a very early period we find that the meaning of signature was minimised. Thus, so long ago as 1638, William Chillingworth wrote in his *Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation*:—

> For the Church of England, I am persuaded that the constant doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox that whosoever believes it and lives according to it, undoubtedly he shall be saved; and that there is no error in it which may necessitate or warrant any man to disturb the peace or renounce the communion of it. This in my opinion is all (that is) intended by subscription.

In more explicit terms, and with great force, Archdeacon Paley afterwards put the difficulty of the case; and his words are just as applicable to the Westminster Confession or any other detailed statement of belief:—

> Those who contend (he says) that nothing less can justify subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles than the actual belief of each and every separate proposition contained in them, must suppose that the Legislature expected the consent of ten thousand men, and that in perpetual succession, not to one controverted proposition, but to many hundreds. It is difficult to conceive how this could be expected by any who observed the incurable diversity of human opinion upon all subjects short of demonstration.[1]

It might perhaps be remarked, by the way, that this is exactly what the Legislature did expect. But let this pass. After Paley's time we find continued recognition from some of the best and greatest men in the Church of England of the impossibility of literal adherence by any one to the whole scheme of Articles. Thus it was maintained by Dr. Arnold of Rugby, and by the late Dean Vaughan, that what was intended was simply a general assent, with express approval

[1] Paley's *Moral and Political Philosophy*, bk. iii. c. 22, p. 1.

of the most characteristic points, amounting, in fact, just to this, that to the candidate for the ministry who signs the Articles, 'the Church of England is the Church of his choice and affections, that he is able with confidence and comfort to worship in its words, to minister in its offices, and to teach in its spirit.' By others, again, it has been urged that the signature in a sense merges the individuality of the candidate in what is called the 'multitudinism' of the Society. Thus a distinguished Scottish Professor, Dr. W. A. Knight of St. Andrews,[1] writes: 'It is the expression of the common faith, the belief of the collective Church,' the manifesto of that Church, in signing which 'we proclaim our unity and deep religious affinity with our brethren,' while we 'sign documents which we would fain see altered both for our own and for our brethren's sake.'

That is, we can conscientiously subscribe to what we may not individually believe, because our brethren believe it, and we wish to associate with them in worship and Church work. It would appear that such association would be more satis-

[1] *Contemporary Review*, August 1876, Art. 'Ethics of Subscription.' See also Appendix, Note 17: *Professor Henry Sidgwick on the Ethics of Subscription.*

factory, to say the least, if it could be attained without this preliminary violence done to our convictions.

But all this casuistry is as nothing compared to the plea that was set up in the year 1841 for the interpretation of the Church of England Articles, in what was called a non-natural sense —that is, the very opposite of the sense which its framers intended. The controversies of that time are so interwoven with the history of religious thought, that it is hardly out of place to refer to them now. In the celebrated Oxford Tract No. 90, Dr. Newman, afterwards Cardinal, but then a clergyman of the Church of England, attempted to show how the most Protestant of the Thirty-nine Articles were susceptible of an anti-Protestant interpretation. Thus where it is affirmed in the Eleventh Article, 'That we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome doctrine,' 'Faith only' does not exclude either Baptism or Good Works as a means of justification. So the Article on Purgatory condemns the *Romish* doctrine of Purgatory, leaving it open to suppose other doctrines of Purgatory which the Article does not condemn; and in like manner of other

doctrines, the whole being clenched by a really ingenious illustration :—

A French Minister, desirous of war, nevertheless as a matter of policy draws up his State papers in such moderate language that his successor, who is for peace, can act up to them without compromising his own principles. The world, observing this, has considered it a circumstance for congratulation; as if the former Minister, who acted a double part, had been caught in his own snare. It is neither decorous nor necessary, nor altogether fair, to urge the parallel rigidly, but it will explain what it is here meant to convey. The Protestant Confession was drawn up with the purpose of excluding Catholics; and Catholics now will not be excluded. What was economy in the Reformers is a protection to us. What would have been a perplexity to us then is a perplexity to Protestants now. We could not then have found fault with their words; they cannot now repudiate our meaning.

Such were the last words of the Oxford Tracts.[1] The attempt to extort a Romish meaning from a document avowedly Protestant was a piece of casuistry which carried the doctrine of non-natural interpretation beyond the breaking strain; and it was no wonder that the author of the Tract soon afterwards found a refuge in the Roman Church.

[1] But the *Quarterly Review*, April 1898, declares that Dr. Newman's main position 'remains untouched to this day.' Art. 'Pusey and Wiseman,' p. 318.

But, it may be said, if the meaning of the Creed is often doubtful, is it not so with Scripture itself? If we repudiate the Creed because its language is susceptible of diverse interpretation, what are we to do with the Bible? I answer, that there is just this difference. The words of Scripture have a definite meaning which we are set to discover; and if our interpretations differ, it is because some of us at least have failed to apprehend what that meaning is. The ambiguity is in our own minds and not in the Oracle. But Creeds and Confessions are often ambiguous in themselves—sometimes unconsciously so, but sometimes of set purpose. It is a convenient device, not unknown to theologians, to agree upon a phrase, avowedly to be understood in different senses by those who adopt it. The *word* is common to us; but, as to its meaning, our views may be allowably different. Definition would at once divide us, but meantime the word has an orthodox sound. The evil is, that we cannot rest in words, and that the compromise is bound to end in misunderstanding and confusion.

A somewhat different case is that in which a word or phrase is used comprehensively, giving to

those who would unite in it an honest alternative of meaning. The method is not an unfair one, frankly recognising differences of opinion, and so stating the truth which underlies these differences that they shall be no bar to fellowship. That this desirable end cannot be effected without some degree of vagueness, is but an incident of the position.

There was a curious instance of such a mode of statement in the Creed of 1843, already quoted as the basis of the Evangelical Alliance. It was at a time when the controversy as to General or Particular Redemption was very keen; and the object was to include both Calvinists and Arminians within the fold. It was obviously impracticable therefore, in referring to the Death of Christ, to say that it was for all men, or only for the elect; and the difficulty was ingeniously met by the declaration that the Atonement was 'for sinners of mankind.' Whether for *some* sinners or for *all* sinners, the Article left open to question; and the rival theologians could shake hands over this convenient ambiguity. The Article is now generally altered into 'for the sins of mankind'; but the fact sheds instructive light on the purpose which

double meanings are often made to serve in Theology.

Sixthly. The remark has to be made, and I think there will be none to question it, that Subscription has not, as a matter of fact, been a safeguard of orthodox belief. To illustrate this remark in detail would be invidious, and I am not here to criticise individual opinions. Only it must be obvious to all that in every section of the professed Church of Christ there is in these days much warring of opinions on theological subjects, and that these discussions are as rife within the Churches that are governed by Creeds as in those which claim a more unrestricted liberty. Every theologian has his opinion as to what are to be accounted the heresies of the time, and every theologian has to admit that these heresies are to be found within the limits of his own Church. The books, for instance, of boldest divergence from received beliefs, that have from time to time startled the religious world in the present and the past generations, have proceeded from subscribers to the Three Christian Creeds and, in many cases, to the Thirty-nine Articles. We have all heard, again, how an eminent Oxford Professor, the late

Dr. Jowett, being on his appointment charged with heterodoxy, was required to clear himself, not by any statements or disavowals on his own part, but simply by signing the Thirty-nine Articles. Here is the extract from his Biography[1] :—

> In 1855 Jowett had been appointed Professor of Greek. Two members of Convocation denounced him to the Vice-Chancellor as having denied the Catholic Faith. Accordingly, the Professor was summoned to appear before the Vice-Chancellor and to sign the Articles anew. He appeared in answer to the summons, and the Vice-Chancellor Cotton began to address him solemnly on the awfulness of his situation. Jowett cut him short with the words: 'Mr. Vice-Chancellor, I have come to sign the Articles.' Dr. Cotton recommenced his harangue. In reply, as tradition has it, Jowett simply asked for a new pen, and wrote his signature without another word.

The incident was characteristic all round; but assuredly no one who had thought the Professor heterodox before would acquit him now for his compliance! Such incidents illustrate the effect of the system in burdening tender consciences. Every thinker, asserting independence, yet conscious of restriction, could not take the matter so coolly as Dr. Jowett. The comprehensiveness which, according to modern theories, is the note of the Churches, is

[1] *Life*, vol. i. p. 235.

found difficult to reconcile with the strictness of the demand. It is useless to argue down the sensitiveness of the hesitating by the allegation that the words are obsolete, or may be read in a non-natural sense, and that nobody now takes them literally. The unsophisticated reason, the conscience only desiring to do right in the sight of God, is still perplexed, and the conflict is very real. The sensitive and conscientious are distressed ; it is the easy-going, indifferent Conformist who is undisturbed. Is this, I may ask, a result to be approved? I am not speaking of one Church alone. I think that there have been anxious moments in the life of more than one Baptist minister, required to accept the provisions of some old chapel Trust-deed !

Our protest does not lead to license. Theoretically, perhaps, this might be apprehended ; but when we come to facts, if any one thing is established in connection with the present subject, it is that the Evangelical Faith stands firmest and thrives most vigorously in the atmosphere of freedom. There are some very significant words in the Declaration of the Congregational Union :

'They wish it to be observed that, notwithstanding their jealousy of subscription to Creeds and Articles, and their disapproval of the imposition of any human standard, whether of faith or discipline, they are far more agreed in their doctrines and practices than any Church which enjoins subscription, and enforces a human standard of orthodoxy.'

This is no unwarrantable boast, and the secret of its truth lies here, that, as already noted in the Baptist Declaration, the basis of Church fellowship is in the renewal of the life. This applies to the ministry as well as to those whom men call the laity. Give us godly pastors and teachers, men in living communion with the Source of light, and from all their ministrations true light will shine. Sometimes it appears to be presumed that the ministers of the Church are a headstrong, self-sufficient race, needing to be held in by the bit and bridle of a Creed, or they would break out on the right hand or the left, to the dire confusion of the people of God. The picture is fantastically unreal. I do not say that we or any of the Churches have as yet an ideal ministry; but I do believe that in every denomination men are advancing towards a larger appreciation of the truth

of God, that their deliverance from human formularies is leading them to cast themselves with a profounder trust upon the teaching and help of the Eternal Spirit, that the Bible is becoming a new and grander book, as the exploration of its deepest meanings is unfettered by the traditions of the past, and that the renunciation of human authority brings the spirit ever more and more under the yoke of the Divine. I may be allowed to borrow a noble comparison from the late Dean Stanley :—

It was observed of the Oracle of Delphi that during all the ages when the oracle commanded the real reverence of Greece, the place in which it was enshrined needed no walls for its defence. The awful grandeur of its natural situation, the majesty of its Temple, were sufficient. Its fortifications, as useless as they were unseemly, were built only in that disastrous time when the ancient feeling of faith had decayed, and the oracle was forced to rely on the arm of flesh, on its bulwarks of brick and stone, not on its own intrinsic sanctity. May God avert this omen from us! It is only in these later ages of the Church, and chiefly in the Protestant portions of Christendom, that subscriptions have been piled up to circumscribe our oracle and our sanctuary! Let us show that we, in these later days, are willing to free ourselves from these unsightly barriers which encumber without defending the Truth which they enclose and hide.[1]

[1] Letter to Bishop Tait 'On Subscription,' 1863.

Yes; we too often mistake encumbrances for bulwarks still. We do so when our guarantees for orthodoxy are supposed to be these frameworks and structures of men's device. It is too easy for us to forget—ministers and people alike—that all faithful souls are in contact with the Living Word. And as we turn from the inadequacy of human Creeds to the Master Himself, we hear Him say: 'If ye abide in My word, then are ye truly My disciples; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free.' 'If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.'[1]

[1] John viii. 31, 36.

LECTURE VII

CERTAINTIES OF FAITH: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

THE importance of fixed and definite convictions of religious truth, without the imposition of authoritative dogma, has already been largely considered in these Lectures. Should the positions taken be accepted, some important questions emerge in regard to our fellow-Christians, who like ourselves may be earnest and strong believers, but whose conclusions on many points may differ from our own. How shall we think of them? And how are such varieties in opinion to affect our Christian fellowship?

In endeavouring to meet these questions, let us first of all note two points:—

1. The substitution of agreement in opinion for the bond of charity is a reversal of New Testa-

ment Church conditions. 'By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples,' said the Master, 'if ye have love one to another.'[1] Against this great declaration, there is absolutely nothing to be set, affirming doctrinal agreement to be the basis of Church life. 'Whereunto we have already attained, by that same rule let us walk.'[2] There is then a unity in which persons of very different degrees in Christian attainment, and so, I may add, of diverse judgment in many things, may still be joined together. No doubt it is a good and pleasant thing that brethren should be one in their thoughts and judgments concerning things divine. But perhaps it is better still, when those who differ can nevertheless walk together in unity of heart, each appreciating the other's position, and able to understand how opposing views may consist with sincerity of purpose, honesty of thought, and holiness of life. Brethren who thus think one of another are more likely in the end to be led to agreement in belief also, than those who begin by mutual excommunication. God's way for His people to unity of thought is through union of heart. They, however, have too often chosen the

[1] John xiii. 35. [2] Phil. iii. 16.

reverse method, and have found it very futile. It is always a mournful thing to find ourselves compelled by force of logic to cast out of our communion those whom we must nevertheless acknowledge, in the essentials of the Christlike character, as even better than ourselves. Yet this is what a rigid adherence to Creed as the basis of fellowship has more than once necessitated, in the annals of the modern Church.

It is where Charity thus predominates that the earnest attachment to our own views of truth will be found compatible with the toleration of different views in others. For then, however ardent and assured our beliefs, Charity must be still the stronger. Nay, if supreme among the forces of our spiritual nature, it will render this word *toleration* inadequate to express our attitude towards the beliefs of our brethren. For toleration implies some kind of superiority. We tolerate in pity; we tolerate inferiors. Acts of Toleration belong to the time when civil rulers claimed authority over faith: only in their clemency they permitted opposing opinions. 'The claim to tolerate,' it has been said, 'implies the right to persecute.' And as in the State the very word is now surrendered

through the acknowledgment of religious equality, so in the Church it may well be replaced by the recognition of Christian brotherhood.

2. Again, there are many subjects on which the Christian thinker, and especially the Christian teacher, will have definitely made up his mind, yet on which he dares not predicate an absolute certainty, and therefore may not require assent from others as a condition of fellowship. His assurance is subjective. 'I believe,' he will say, with the fervour of full conviction, 'that I am right; but if my brother has come to a different conclusion, much as I may be surprised at the fact, greatly as I may deplore it, I still give him credit for intelligence and honesty equal to my own, and hold communion with him as a brother in Christ.' Thus, it may be, I am a Calvinist, a Congregationalist, a Baptist; and while I am convinced that these beliefs are sound, I fully acknowledge the right of my brother to differ, and can fully respect those who are as positive in contradicting as I am in maintaining them.

Such attitude of mind may sometimes, no doubt, arise from religious indifference, when men do not care enough about their convictions to

make them a reason for separating from those who hold opposing views. It is maintained by some that all tolerance is of this kind. 'If I believe strongly,' it is said, 'if I am assured that I am in the right, I must be equally assured that the opposite opinion must be wrong: how then can I consort on equal terms with those who, in my sincere judgment, are in error? Is it not my duty to set the Truth before them, and to stand aloof from them ecclesiastically, until they have received it?' So some excellent people argue; and in fact their very excellence seems to render them the more intolerant, infusing into their character an element of earnestness which makes contradiction of their views to appear a sin against the God of truth, and which, when power and opportunity are given, renders them persecutors.

The fallacy is, that such persons mistake their certainty of conviction for *infallibility*. Probably they would in words disclaim this; and yet it is impossible to read the arguments of many theologians, or to note the procedure of some Christian societies, without concluding that those who thus write and act do implicitly assume themselves to

be infallible.[1] The very tone in which they use the phrase 'the Truth' of their own religious views, and attribute 'soundness' or the reverse to their brethren accordingly, implies this assumption. In fact, it requires at once a large intelligence and a comprehensive charity to be able to say with entire honesty and at one and the same time: 'I firmly believe that I am in the right,' and 'I fully admit that I may be in the wrong.' 'Cannot a man,' says Archbishop Bramhall, 'believe or hold his own religion to be true, but he must necessarily say, or censure another man's (which he conceiveth to be opposite) to be false? Truth and Falsehood are contradictory, or of eternal disjunction; but there is a medium be-

[1] Bishop Marsh, in his *Lectures on Criticism and Interpretation*, has some acute remarks on the difference between *does not err* and *cannot err*. 'These terms, insignificant as they may appear, denote nothing less than two distinct principles of action; and principles so distinct, that the one leads to charity and toleration, the other to intolerance and persecution. On the former principle, which is maintained by the Church of England, though we believe we are right, we admit that we are possibly wrong; though we believe that others are wrong, we admit that they are possibly right; and hence we are disposed to tolerate their opinions. But on the latter principle, which is maintained by the Church of Rome, the very possibility of being right is denied to those who dissent from its doctrines. Now, as soon as men have persuaded themselves that in points of doctrine they cannot err, they will think it an imperious duty to prevent the growth of all other opinions on a subject so important as religion.'—P. 319 (ed. 1828).

tween believing or holding my own religion to be true, and saying or censuring another man's (which perhaps is opposite) to be false—both more prudential and more charitable—that is, silence; to work circumspectly myself, and have other men to stand or fall to their own Master.'[1] That was sound advice which Oliver Cromwell addressed to the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland: 'I am persuaded that divers of you, who lead the people, have laboured to build yourselves in these things, wherein you have censured others and established yourselves (as you profess) "upon the Word of God." Is it therefore infallibly agreeable to the Word of God, all that you say? I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken.'[2]

The assumption of infallibility is more insidious than we may think. We protest against it from Rome; we need to be on our guard in other directions. Beware of the controversialist who is in the habit of saying, 'I wonder how any one can honestly read his Bible and not believe—as I do. At the same time, remembering that there may

[1] *Schism Guarded*, p. 397. See further in Hampden's *Bampton Lectures*, introd. p. lxxxvii. (ed. 1848).

[2] Letter, 3rd August 1650, as given by Carlyle.

be decided conviction without any such claim, beware with equal sensitiveness of the man who would persuade you that what you firmly believe cannot be of much consequence, because others as wise as yourself believe the opposite. It is always of consequence to be in the right, in the smaller as well as in the greater matters of faith; and eventual unity will be attained, not by the compromises of the half-informed or the half-convinced, but by the gradual accord of minds so much in earnest that their passion for truth has led them to review their most pronounced diversities of opinion in the very light of God.

Bearing in mind, then, these two considerations, the supreme law of charity and our own liability to error, we may proceed to estimate the grounds of Christian certainty. And we note three main points:

1. There are some things in the Christian Creed which are absolutely sure to the believer. That is, if Christianity is to be accepted at all as a revelation from God, these things must be true.

2. There are other beliefs on which most Christian thinkers will have made up their minds

one way or the other, with varying degrees of definiteness and decision, often differing among themselves.

3. There are still other subjects, on which thought and speculation may be exercised, but on which it would be rash to express a decided opinion, because they lie outside the boundary both of human knowledge and Divine revelation.

With regard to the first-mentioned range of topics, we may ask, What are the certainties of faith?

This question, to answer it with any fulness, would demand a theological treatise to itself. We are concerned only now to mark that to all of us who accept Christianity there are such certainties, assured by repeated and definite declarations of Holy Scripture, accepted by the general Christian consciousness, and attested by their influence upon our own souls. These connect themselves with the great threefold revelation, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is to say, the Christian is one who owns the Fatherhood of God, the Redemption which is by Christ Jesus, and the communication of light and life by the Eternal Spirit. How these

thoughts are to be translated into dogma is not now the question. They are the powers of the new life; without them there is no Christianity. And the believer is one who has found them to be true. He receives them on the warrant of faith; but they have also passed into his consciousness and experience. He is sure of them; he has a right to be sure. No doubt, the testimony of consciousness and experience will be variously read by different minds. The certainty belongs not to the mode of apprehension, but to the fact itself; and the glad utterance of the soul will be, *I know*. Read some of the early testimonies with which all this accords. Such is the keynote of the General Epistle of the beloved John: 'We know,' 'ye know.' The very phrase occurs sixteen times in that short Letter, and expresses in every variety of form the disciple's assurance with regard to the central verity. We know the Father, the Son, the Spirit. This knowledge is our life: 'We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ.' Or look again at the description of the Christian certainty in the grand words of Paul:

'All riches of the full assurance of the understanding to the perfect knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.' So—triumphant in assurance to the end—we hear the Apostle say, 'I know Him whom I have believed.'[1] There are, as most of you know, three main words by which knowledge is described in the New Testament—the knowledge which comes from without, knowledge as insight, knowledge comprehensive and complete—and in the passages quoted all three of these words are found; so full, intense, profound, is the certainty of Faith!

We may note two main criteria by which this certainty is confirmed.

One is personal, and may be applied by every one who is conscious of reconciliation with God. The truth, whatever it is, must be in accord with that which is deepest in the spiritual life—with true repentance, with faith that leads to holy living, with love to God and to mankind. These things are great experiences, Divine certainties; and the presumption is that the beliefs which are in harmony with them, which minister to them, apart

[1] 1 John v. 20; Col. ii. 3; 2 Tim. i. 12.

from which they could not exist, are certainties too. Apply this test in the reverse way (if the supposition be not too violent) to the special doctrines of the faith. Conceive it possible for some devout and earnest soul to say, 'It is when most consciously in communion with God that I think least of what Christians call the Triune mystery; and when I most ardently aspire after the Divine life, that my thoughts of Christ are lowest. In the hours when the burden of sin presses most heavily on my spirit, and I most keenly feel the need of an Omnipotent Deliverer, I am most tempted to deny the necessity of a Divine Sacrifice; and in proportion to the earnestness with which I strive after a pure and unselfish life, is my impulse to call in question the doctrines of regeneration and sanctifying grace. In a word, my better moments, my moments of purest emotion and loftiest aspiration, lead me to rationalism; and the approach of narrowing sympathies and hardening secularity is the signal of my return to an Evangelical belief.' Supposing, I say, a confession like this to be made by a good and honest man, we might be tempted to reconsider the grounds of our faith. But the very supposition

is wildly impossible ; and the doctrines which, on the contrary, show themselves connected with the profoundest realities of the spiritual life, have upon them the authentic and ineffaceable stamp of the Divine.

The second point is, that in the Truth, wherever it may lie, there must be a Gospel to mankind. That men need a Gospel of some kind may be taken for granted, not merely as a religious commonplace, but as the inevitable conviction of every student of humanity. For the conscience-stricken, the depraved, the miserable, the labouring and heavy-laden all the world over, is there deliverance, enlightenment, and rest? If so, where is the teaching, what the message, that shall convey the priceless blessing? You know how such questions have again and again been asked ; and how the answer is but one ;—that answer everywhere ; or else silence and despair ! The revelation of God in Christ, which is the centre of the Christian Creed, is also the world's only hope : and this also enstamps upon that Creed the character of Truth.

The certainties, then, are in those truths that prove themselves inseparable from the culture of

the personal religious life, and from the uplifting and regeneration of mankind at large. The acceptance of these truths, and a life in accord with them, is the mark of the Universal Church.

Those further convictions and beliefs to which I referred in the second place, include all those varieties of religious opinion which are held in connection with these central truths, as their development, interpretation, application. Here Christian thinkers often gravely differ. Such beliefs are sometimes termed the 'nonessentials' of the Faith—a term, however, which it seems on many accounts undesirable to employ. There is a certain faithlessness to Truth in the very thought of such a distinction. The great questions of faith cannot bear to be put in duplicate form: What *must* I believe? and What *may* I believe? A man who desires to learn the whole counsel of God must be prepared to stand faithfully by all his convictions, on matters great and small, although indeed he may hold them with different degrees of assurance. To discriminate these several convictions, to ask which of them are fundamental, not to be denied without renouncing

the Christian faith altogether and so rendering Christian fellowship impossible, is no doubt a delicate and difficult task—the more so, as we remember that the essentials of that fellowship are laid down in the New Testament as rather of the heart than of the head. Where there is true repentance, self-renunciation, trust in Christ as Saviour, love to God and man, there is essential Christianity.

Let it be remembered, too, that these may be expressed in different ways and forms of speech. A man's professions do not always convey his real faith. Bacon, in his *Essay of Unity in Religion*, has put this thought very strikingly. 'A man,' he says, 'that is of judgment and understanding, shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves could never agree: and if it so come to pass in that distance of judgment that is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail men, in some of their contradictions, intend the same thing, and accepteth of both?'[1]

[1] Essay III.

Very pleasant is it to think of this true harmony of souls underlying all such contradictions of speech, and to recognise the essentials of faith and love where the apprehension of vital truth seems most imperfect. Sometimes, at least, you find the Christian life, in the apparent absence or even denial of the Christian doctrine. The traveller in tropical deserts will here and there come upon a palm-tree, in its verdure and beauty, rooted as it seems upon the arid sand. Strange phenomenon! But he knows the secret. Beneath the sands the roots are fed by a living stream of water that never rises into light, but spends itself upon the life and beauty of that solitary tree. Just so will the Spirit of God, always wonderful in working, silently communicate His own life and power to souls that to us seem rooted in a barren theology, quite outside the fair enclosed gardens of our most orthodox creeds.

Certain truths there are, whether explicitly professed or implicitly received, both certain and fundamental. Perhaps the time has not yet come, in the history of the Church, for defining these truths, or for apprehending to its full extent the distinction between the Divine facts and the forms

of thought under which these facts are apprehended. For the distinction undoubtedly exists. Take, by way of illustration, such cardinal truths of the Gospel as are expressed by the words *Incarnation*, *Redemption*, *Revelation*, *Immortality*. Now Incarnation is a fact: the union of the human with the divine. Apart from this there is no Christianity. 'God is in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself.' But when we would analyse and understand this truth, making it an object, not of blind but of intelligent belief, we are led to form theories regarding it, theories of the method of that mysterious union, theories of *kenosis*, and what not, which more or less approximate to the sublime and mysterious reality, but which belong to our metaphysics rather than to our faith, and which perhaps will never be fully apprehended until we can begin by understanding the mystery of the union of body, soul, and spirit in ourselves.

I speak, it will be observed, of Theory and Fact as separate and distinct. But the truth which undoubtedly exists in such a distinction may be pressed too far. How common is it, for instance, for a liberal thinker to say, 'I accept the fact without the theory: my religion is a religion

of facts, let theologians reason and speculate about them as they will. I believe in the Deity and the Humanity of Christ; but how the two are united I do not seek to know;—I believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures; but as to the method of it, I have no explanation to give.' And so of many other great subjects. Now this view is plausible: it expresses at least a half-truth, important to remember. But before accepting it wholly, let us define what we mean by a fact. It is not simply an *historical occurrence.* That Jesus of Nazareth 'suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried' are such facts, attested by historical methods and so believed. But go a step further. 'He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God.' Here also, in a sense, are historical occurrences; our warrant for them, however, is no longer the ordinary historical evidence, but the declarations of inspired men. These we accept and still believe. But further still, 'He maketh intercession for us'; 'He shall come again to judge the living and the dead.' Facts once more, but now belonging to the spiritual realm, and involving *truths*, which are nothing to us unless we go beyond their bare

announcement, and apprehend in some measure what they mean. Now, taking fact in the larger significance, not only of occurrences cognisable by the senses, but of spiritual realities, it will appear that in the very fact there is an element of doctrine. You cannot even state it without implying some kind of theory, however partial. Thus, that Christ 'died to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,' is a spiritual fact; but that this may be intelligible to yourself, or that you may make it intelligible to others, the phrases 'putting away sin,' and 'sacrifice' must convey some sort of meaning to the mind. To say therefore, 'I believe in the Atonement as a fact, but have no theory respecting it,' is a somewhat illusive assertion. It must mean more than the belief that Jesus Christ was put to death on a cross at the place called Calvary; but when once you go beyond this and inquire into the reason of that death, some kind of theory will inevitably come in.

The proper distinction, then, is not between fact and theory in themselves, but between a general conception and a full analysis, between the revealed explanation and the human development. Enough is known for trust and salvation, 'the rest

remaineth unrevealed.' Bishop Butler wisely says, in a familiar passage: 'How and in what particular way the sacrifice of Christ had its efficacy, there are not wanting persons who have endeavoured to explain; but I do not find that the Scripture has explained it. We seem to be very much in the dark concerning the manner in which the ancients understood atonement to be made, *i.e.* pardon to be obtained by sacrificing. And if the Scripture, as surely it has, left this matter of the sacrifice of Christ, left somewhat in it unrevealed, all conjectures about it must be, if not evidently absurd, yet at least uncertain.'[1] True; yet, as we have seen, we can hardly fix our thought upon this great act of love without forming some kind of theory, consciously or implicitly, respecting it. That theory in a manner will condition our trust, although the trust itself may exist independently of it. Thus, the Fathers trusted in Christ, while they taught with Gregory of Nyssa, and many more, that He paid upon the Cross a ransom-price to Satan to rescue them from his power. So did Anselm, who swept that theory away, maintaining that the ransom was paid to God in satisfaction

[1] *Analogy*, part ii. ch. v. (§ 18, Gladstone's Ed.).

of His righteous claim upon mankind. So did the Reformers, with their notion of substitutionary punishment for the sins of the elect. So do the moderns, like M'Leod Campbell and Dr. Dale, with their various theories of moral equivalent and vicarious self-offering to God. So did the Romanist Faber, who gives a voice to the simplicity of trust :—

I cannot understand the woe,
Which Thou wast pleased to bear,
O Lamb of God! I only know
That all my hopes are there.

Take again the question of Revelation. What God Himself has made known in the teachings of Scripture is a fact; but when we endeavour to reduce it within the forms of the understanding, theory begins. Shall we say that the Scriptures are themselves the Word of God, or, as some prefer to put it, the Words of God, or that they *contain* His Word? Shall we profess our belief in the direct communication to inspired men of language as well as of thought, and even maintain with some of the Reformation divines,[1] that as the Massoretic vowel-points in the Old Testament

[1] As in the Helvetic *Formula of Consent* (1675). See above, Lect. III. p. 111, note.

often determine the sense, these also were communicated from heaven? Or shall we be content with the declaration of the Augsburg Confession and the Sixth Article of the Church of England, that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation?' And again of Immortality. This also is an unquestioned part of the Christian Creed, a certainty to every one who holds the Christian Faith. But is immortality natural and universal, the heritage of all mankind, or the gift of Christ to those only who are in Him? Is there a separate state—body and soul being severed by death until the end of the world? or is the earthly house of this tabernacle, so soon as it is dissolved, clothed at once with the spiritual body? Then, again, do the benefits of Christ's redemption extend in any way to the world beyond the grave, so that there may be possible forgiveness after death? All these are questions which Christian thinkers are asking in our time; and the answers to them are theories, opinions, beliefs,

more or less uncertain, grafted upon the great certainty of the Immortal Life.

A similar train of remark might be pursued with regard to many other points of Christian doctrine. But three general remarks may here suffice in relation to all such questions of theology —to the interpretations, applications, developments, of the great central truths.

The first is, that it is important to seek distinct convictions respecting them. They belong to the revelation of God, and are not to be treated as indifferent. The fact that men have differently conceived of these truths does not invalidate them in themselves. Our own Christian life will be largely affected by our conceptions of them, and, as we have seen, we may be firmly convinced respecting them without being either dogmatic or exclusive. But to be thus firmly convinced, to know what we believe and why, is needful for the perfect man in Christ Jesus.

A second point is, that such beliefs will be held with very varying strength of conviction and sense of their relative value to the religious life. Certain of these beliefs will appear of more importance than others; and this comparative estimate,

again, will vary in different minds. Thus it was said by Professor Duncan of Edinburgh (called Rabbi Duncan for his Hebrew lore), 'I am first a Christian, next a Catholic, then a Calvinist, fourth a Pædobaptist, and fifth a Presbyterian. I cannot reverse this order.'[1] It would be interesting in like manner to have a similar testimony from other theologians, of different schools of thought, as to the order of their convictions. Such a statement would perhaps be of as much value as their declarations of the beliefs themselves. It is not only what we hold, but how we hold it, and in what relation to other opinions, that indicates and determines our theology.

The third remark is, that upon some of these questions Christian people are manifestly coming nearer to one another. It would be but a poor prospect for the Church if these secondary doctrines of the Faith were to continue to the end the subject of endless debate and division. So long, however, as men are simply controversialists, it will probably remain so. They feel called to be champions of their respective creeds; there is the ever-present temptation to fight for victory rather

[1] *Colloquia Peripatetica*, p. 8.

than for truth; and even the vanquished in the wordy strife often love their cause all the more for the defeat—

Victrix causa Diis placuit sed victa Catoni.

But let the respective parties exchange their bellicose attitude for that of fellow-students of the Word and will of God, and approximation becomes possible. I think that there are already subjects on which controversy has almost ceased in mutual reconciliation. The universal Fatherhood of God is no longer hotly opposed as in days that some of us have known. The largest and freest offer of the Gospel is not now among us regarded as disloyal to the Divine Sovereignty. So with many another once disputed topic. But the most significant fact of all, perhaps, is that the olden style of controversy has altogether changed. It is within my own memory that scarcely any one was supposed to do justice to his cause who did not charge his opponents with either ignorance or wickedness. They were 'wilfully blind,' 'despisers of the testimony of God.' Now, they are but brethren mistaken, and future agreement becomes at least a possibility.

But now we have, in the third place, to take into account many other religious opinions and speculations, in which devout and inquiring minds will indulge, but on which full satisfaction is impossible. Such questions, which have greatly troubled the Churches in the past, are happily almost by common consent now laid aside. Or if any of us have attempted to solve them, we, like other men, have found them fathomless. Coleridge has somewhere said that the mind rests as calmly before a difficulty once seen to be insoluble as before the most certain of admitted truths. In mediæval times Christian students were much exercised on the subject of Angelology. It seemed as if the secrets of the spiritual world could be better understood if it could only be decided what angels were like, what were their special endowments and character, their employments and their powers. Then, the doctrine of evil angels was so closely connected with the subject of witchcraft, which for centuries exerted such real and terrible influence over the minds of men, that the man was reckoned a benefactor to theology who could best expound the laws supposed to govern these superior, or inferior, intelligences. All this has vanished now ; we

can hardly imagine how such questions could ever have been a topic of serious thought. Yet there are other matters of opinion, hardly yet remitted to the region of the unknowable, the discussion of which appears almost as hopeless. Some of these belong also to the invisible world ; others again to the metaphysics of practical theology ; as if there could be no satisfactory acceptance of the Gospel message, or proclamation of it to others, until we could decide how the infinite and finite will can co-exist, how faith can be man's duty while it is God's gift, whether inability is natural or moral or both, and how far responsibility exists in spite of it. Such problems agitated many very devout minds in the past generation : perhaps they have now gone the way of that which once troubled the inquirer who came to Christ with the question, 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' and to whom the Master simply answered, in a way which may be the model for our own dealing with many a speculative difficulty—'Strive ye to enter by the narrow door.'[1] True philosophy and sincere devoutness alike turn from the unknowable to that which may be known.

[1] Luke xiii. 24.

There is such a thing, then, as a wise Christian agnosticism. Humility will confess, 'I do not know'; it may seem presumption to add, 'And no man can know.' Yet this must sometimes be asserted by all who understand the limitations of human powers. Be sure that not a few questions which perplex us now will one day be acknowledged to belong to the realm of darkness. For around the central convictions which are a man's deepest Faith, and the further beliefs that constitute his cherished Opinions, there extends on every side a nebulous region, so to speak—a sphere of mystery, bounded over its whole circumference by the clouds and darkness that are round about the Throne of God. By thought and study we may gradually extend the boundaries of clear conviction and settled faith, winning new conquests from the realm of uncertainty, and turning cloudland into light. But there is a limit in every direction to the possibilities of our acquirement; and to our present faculties much will remain dimly mysterious or altogether dark. Only at the centre let there be light! 'God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.' There, I repeat, is the central verity, which with its kindred truths

and far-reaching consequences—as yet by us how dimly seen!—will one day fill the whole sphere with its glory.

'First a Christian,' said Rabbi Duncan, 'then a Catholic.' So far this is unquestionably the Divine order—a universal truth, therefore a universal fellowship. For every ground of separation becomes as nothing in comparison with this great uniting reality. Yet it is to be feared that we have somewhat lost the idea of the Catholic Church, in fact that we are content to let it go. We are so justly impatient of the spiritual arrogance that limits the fellowship of Christians to a single community, separated from the rest of mankind by a visible line of demarcation, a boundary which includes multitudes of the unspiritual and equally excludes a multitude of the spiritual, that we have been ready to ask whether Universality be a note of the Church on earth at all. There is, we know, a Church invisible, the company of all the people of God on earth and in heaven; but is it possible, in the present state of things, to make this sublime unity manifest? Surely it ought to be possible. 'That they all may be one,' the Master prayed,

'that the world may believe.' A spiritual, invisible unity is no complete answer to this prayer. For the world cannot be convinced by what it does not see. Nay, according to its own judgment, it sees very much the contrary. Thus, I open a work on the Thirty-nine Articles by the late Dr. Jelf, and read this sentence: 'The Quakers, never having been baptized, and denying the very notion of baptism, are not Christians at all, and in fact are gross Socinians.'[1] Now, I ask, what must the ordinary unbiassed reader, conversant with the history of the Society of Friends, think of a statement like this? Their piety, zeal, self-denial, charity, their devotion to God, and their labours for mankind, are all to go for nothing! They are 'not Christians at all' because they have not been baptized! One is almost tempted to say, that if this were the spirit of Christianity, no external evidence could ever prove it to be from God. Yet similar *dicta* are not infrequent in controversial works.

Sometimes, again, the assertion is made, not of individuals but of Churches. The persons themselves, it is conceded, may be Christians, but their association is not a Christian Church. I

[1] *On the Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 236.

have noticed on more than one recent occasion when Churchmen have fraternised with Nonconformists in a most cordial and delightful way, with mutual interchange of Christian greetings and good wishes, all evidently sincere, how carefully the word *Church* is avoided by the former in all references to our fellowship. We have Societies and Communities; we are Denominations and Bodies, but never Churches. In some way or other we are given to understand that we are still without the pale; and all discussions respecting ultimate unity hinge upon this—how are the wanderers (not to use the offensive terms heretics and schismatics) to be gathered into our system? 'There is one Body,' said an Apostle, 'and one Spirit.' The one Spirit may be conceded, though doubtfully; one Body there certainly is not, if the Body means that which is apparent; and the Christian thinker is fain to be content with the thought that, although Sectarianism is unavoidable on earth, there will be no sect in heaven.[1]

This state of things cannot last for ever. But how is it to be remedied? Not, I would venture

[1] See Appendix, Note 18: *Discussion on the Catholicity of Orthodox Nonconformists.*

to reply, by attempts at reorganisation. No new framework will restore the broken unity; the impulse to the larger and deeper fellowship must come from within. Many well-meaning endeavours have been witnessed in our time to break loose from denominationalism, and societies have been gathered of believers who profess to renounce all sect and system in the hope of securing a purer communion; but such endeavours seem always to end in one way—in a more rigid and hopeless exclusiveness than that of the denominations themselves. Yet the ideal remains, although its realisation must be sought in another way. Not by separation for the sake of union, not by new efforts at constitution-making, but by cultivating a true spirit of union within our several Churches, will the consummation for which we long be gradually but surely attained. To break up our Church-systems, imperfect though they all may be, would result not in union but in chaos. 'It is good for the present distress'—and here I apply an apostolic principle, although in a different way —'to abide in that wherein we were called.'[1] But meanwhile, so far as in us lies, let us endeavour

[1] See 1 Cor. vii. 20, 26.

to assimilate our own little communities to the great ideal.

We are often told, quite correctly, that *the* Church, in New Testament language, and *a* Church, or Churches denote two different conceptions. The Church is universal, invisible; a Church is the individual society. Most true; but is it impossible to go one step farther, and to hold that a Church faithful to its highest calling, should correspond, so far as earthly imperfection will permit, with the idea of the Church universal? It should be a *microcosm*, a model on minute scale of the great reality. In its scattered units it should fulfil the old physiological dream that in every separate atom of the plant there lay the archetype of the perfect flower.

Not yet can this be brought to pass. For one thing, the different forms of Church organisation and government would stand in the way of Catholic fellowship. The doctrinal Trust-deeds, prepared in all simplicity by our fathers, would be a very practical difficulty. Richard Baxter expressed a natural longing when he said of the Westminster Assembly: 'I wish that they had hit upon the right way, either to unite with the

Episcopalians and Independents, or at least had pitched on the terms that are fit for universal concord, and leave all to come in upon those terms that would.'[1] But the opportunity was lost, never to recur from that time to this. Yet there may at least be a beginning. Let each individual Christian Society, whatever its denominational connection, adopt as the principle of its membership the rule, 'Christians all, Christians only,' knowingly accepting none whom Christ excludes, and knowingly excluding none whom Christ receives, exacting no subscription to human creeds, and, in the phrase of Robert Hall, making no terms of Communion which are not terms of Salvation; and already there will be individual, faint, but true reflections of that sublime reality, the Communion of Saints. I should be false to my own convictions if I did not add that this result seems to me likely to be best attained on the Congregational model, according to what such writers as Bishop Lightfoot and Dr. Edwin Hatch have shown to be the Church constitution of the New Testament. And as to our own — the Baptist branch of Congregationalism—I will only

[1] Baxter's *Life and Times* (Sylvester, 1696), p. 73.

say that we seem to have this advantage, that our ecclesiastical system is conditioned from the first by a personal act. There is thus a distinct recognition of individual responsibility, the logical outcome of which is, as it appears to me, that we are bound so to respect individual conviction as to be ready to welcome all who make credible confession of their faith in Christ, and of their honest desire to obey His will.

Into these points I enter, simply because we may hence gather some hint or suggestion of what the Church of the future may be. Christian congregations gathered according to such a model —and really I care but little what the outward organisation may be, so that this essential were secured — might at first be weak, small, far-scattered; but the mutual recognition would be sure to come. Each Bethel of ours would in its free communion image the Church universal, and Churches, of whatever different denomination, would be so like one another in this main feature of their constitution, that the inward attraction would become mightier than any external bonds of union. The scattered points of light would grow into one glorious splendour: the Churches, first

owning in their deepest consciousness, would then make manifest to the world, that they together formed the One Church of the living Christ. The little Bethels would expand into the New Jerusalem, the Holy City coming down from heaven to earth.

We live by ideals. In our personal character and work, it is not what we are or can do at present which determines our true character, so much as the aspiration and resolution that are within us—the discernment of distant possibilities, the striving after an unattained result. So is it with the Church of Christ. Only let us lay hold upon the conviction, unquestioning and profound, that the manifestation of the Unity of all believers is part of the Church's high vocation ; and, far enough as we are from this ideal at present, we shall be striving towards it with a constancy of earnestness and aim, which, if only shared by all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, will make all ecclesiastical systems and separations of Creed give way before the mighty impulse.

This Church in its ideal is set before us by the seer of Patmos : 'having the glory of God, and

the Lamb in the midst thereof.' Do not, I beseech you, banish the sphere of that glorious prophecy to the world beyond the stars, as mournful, mediæval hymnists have done. The City of God is already among us, though invisibly, in the accord of all faithful souls. Ages may roll on, for aught I know, before its true proportions shall be seen, and the nations walk in the light of it. That light will be revealed, and the world will know that God hath sent His Son, when His Church shall be able to show itself as it is—standing foursquare, in symmetry and strength; while its ever-open gates, fronting all directions, offer an equal welcome to travellers from every field of thought. The inhabitants of the City, grown wiser then, will have ceased to bar any of those open gates by human Creeds; and the consummated unity of the Church will be the salvation of the world.

What shall we say to these things? 'I awoke and, lo, it was a dream'? No, for the vision is divine; showing us, as we gaze on it with straining eyes and strive to understand all the glory that it means, what we in this our generation may

attempt. Let us but stand fast by the conviction that Christ's Church is One; let us individually repudiate all systems and schemes that would conceal or impair that unity, assured that they cannot be according to the mind of Christ; and we shall have contributed something towards the manifestation of the One Catholic Church. Every true disciple carries the secret of Catholicity within himself. To believe strongly, to hope exultingly, are the gifts of heaven; but there is a gift beyond in which the promise of perfection lies: 'For now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity; but the greatest of these is Charity.'

APPENDIX

NOTE I. (Lecture I. p. 3)

The Influence of Words on our Conceptions of Faith

ARCHDEACON JULIUS HARE, in his *Victory of Faith*, has some valuable remarks on the influence of words over our conceptions of Faith. 'The poverty,' he says, 'and want of formative power in our language, in which there is no verb manifestly belonging to the same family with *Faith*, by leading us to have recourse to the verb *believe*, which, in its ordinary acceptation, expresses an act almost purely intellectual, has helped to foster the erroneous notion that in Faith also the intellectual act is all in all. The verb *believe*, being far more widely spread and connected in our language, has drawn away its corresponding substantive *Faith* from its more appropriate meaning. So likewise in the Latin verb *credo*, which tended much to determine the signification of *fides*, the notion of the intellectual act is more prominent than in the Greek πιστεύω. Hence it was with the fullest right that Luther and Melanchthon, when the true idea of Faith and of its power was reasserted at the Reformation, were anxious to urge again and again that faith is trust, that faith signifies *trust:* "fides est fiducia"; "fides significat fiduciam."'—*Sermon* i. pp. 20, 21.

NOTE II. (Lecture II. p. 44)

Latin Text of the Apostles' Creed

The authentic text of the Creed is as follows :—

Credo in Deum Patrem Omnipotentem ; Creatorem cœli et terræ.

Et in Jesum Christum, Filium ejus unicum, Dominum nostrum ; qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria virgine ; passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus, et sepultus ; descendit ad inferna ; tertia die resurrexit a mortuis ; ascendit ad cœlos ; sedit ad dexteram Dei Patris omnipotentis ; inde venturus (est) judicare vivos et mortuos.

Credo in Spiritum Sanctum ; sanctam ecclesiam catholicam ; sanctorum communionem ; remissionem peccatorum ; carnis resurrectionem ; vitam æternam. Amen.

NOTE III. (Lecture II. p. 46)

Tradition of the Joint Authorship of the Creed

The tradition was thrown into a form to aid the memory in some rude hexameter verses, dating probably from the twelfth century :—

Articula fidei sunt bis sex corde tenendi,
Quos Christi socii docuerunt pneumate pleni :
Credo Deum Patrem, *Petrus* inquit, cuncta creantem ;
Andræas dixit, Ego credo Jesum fore Christum ;
Conceptum, natum, *Jacobus ;* passumque, *Joannes ;*
Inferna, *Philipus*, fugit ; *Thomasque*, revixit ;
Scandit, *Bartholomæus ;* veniet censere, *Matthæus ;*
Pneuma, *Minor Jacobus ; Simon*, peccata remittit ;
Restituit, *Judas*, carnem ; vitamque, *Matthias*.[1]

[1] From a Latin poem, *Floretus*, printed in the *Works of St. Bernard*. See Migne, *Dictionnaire des Apocryphes*, ii. 113, 114.

NOTE IV. (Lecture II. p. 55)

Discussion of the Creed in the Reformed Church of Geneva

A significant correspondence between certain congregations in the Reformed Church of Geneva and the Consistory, 1869, expresses in a succinct form the objections which have in modern times been entertained by many to the liturgical use of that document, with the reply to those objections by those who nevertheless do not require subscription to it as a condition of entering the ministry :—

I. LETTER FROM THE CONGREGATIONS

GENEVA, *May* 1869.

To the President and Members of the Consistory—

We approach you with the request to remove from our Liturgy the so-called Apostles' Creed.

This formulary, as historical investigation has abundantly demonstrated, does not go back to the primitive age ; it is simply the Confession of Faith of ancient Catholicism. It is therefore not Protestant, and consequently many Reformed Churches have rejected it from their Liturgy.

In a Church like ours, therefore, which is not only Protestant, but liberated in addition from every Confession of Faith, the reading of the Creed is a two-fold inconsistency.

The Creed does not represent either the faith of our own pastors, or that of the Protestant people of Geneva. No one of us could sign it, accepting it in its literal and historical meaning. The descent of Jesus into hell, the resurrection of the flesh, and the communion of saints, are dogmas absolutely foreign to our sentiments and beliefs. Every one of us is compelled more or less to translate these articles into a different sense ; and plainly so, when we intend to

avow belief in an impalpable *Universal Church*, where the Creed has always designated the Church as *Catholic* in the unique and traditional significance of the word.

This method of translation, written or mental, which wholly changes the character of a historic document, does not appear to us worthy of a Protestant people. To ask of God to be enabled always publicly to make confession of articles which no one would be able to admit in their true sense is a thing at variance with the seriousness of Christian worship.

The accusations directed against our pastors on the subject of the reading of the Creed are evidently unjust and intemperate. They are not in any way bound in conscience by a Liturgy which an elective and changeable body could at any time alter at its pleasure. The Consistory alone must bear the responsibility of all that the clergy read by its order from our pulpits.

It is not therefore for our pastors, it is on our own behalf, it is on behalf of the dignity and sincerity of our worship, that we ask you to remove from our Liturgy this legacy of Catholicism and grievous trace of the régime of Confessions of Faith. (Signatures.)

II. Reply

Geneva, 25*th June* 1869.

Gentlemen—The Consistory has very seriously and thoroughly discussed the memorial which you have addressed to it, requesting the discontinuance of the reading of the Apostles' Creed from our pulpits.

A preliminary consideration presents itself to the Consistory, in the danger which there would be in modifying at this moment our Liturgies in any way whatsoever. Undoubtedly they are not unchangeable ; undoubtedly also they will always present defects in detail which might be

advantageously modified; but they were revised less than ten years since, as the result of long and conscientious labour. Should we now already be called upon to retouch them? We cannot conceal from ourselves that one change would bring on others: the objections and scruples urged against the Creed would apply, under a different form, but with quite as much force, to a great number of our liturgical forms; and the existing Consistory cannot consent to embark upon this course, believing that as a whole our liturgies do represent and accurately sum up the sentiments and belief of our Church.

The Creed, it is true, is not the work of the Apostles, and has not therefore in our eyes the authority of a Biblical document; but it is a document which has for itself the consecration of ages, which was preserved by the Reformers, and of which the constant use has established among us its true meaning. And if its use is objected to as an inconsistency in a Church without Confessions of Faith, we are justified in replying that, without being a Confession of Faith, it has the advantage of offering a summary of the facts contained in the Gospel and placed by our ecclesiastical constitution at the foundation of Christianity.

Another class of considerations favours the maintenance of the Creed. It is the only expression of the Christian Faith common to all the great Christian congregations; it is a point of contact and communion between a large number of communities which range themselves under the banner of the Gospel; and in presence of the divisions which separate not only the Reformed Church from Catholicism, but the Protestant Churches one from another, this is a fact of great and pious interest which gives to the Apostles' Creed an unquestionable value.

Finally, the Consistory, bound to be guided by the convictions and desires of the electoral body from which it

springs, is absolutely certain that among the persons who habitually frequent the worship of the Church, and take an active share in its life, a considerable majority would have their feelings deeply wounded if by virtue of a measure emanating from ecclesiastical authority the reading of the Creed should be discontinued in our services.

(Signed by the President.)

NOTE V. (Lecture II. p. 57)

The Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed in its final form as received by the Eastern Church

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἕνα Θεὸν Πατέρα, παντοκράτορα, ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, ὁρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ ἀοράτων.

Καὶ εἰς ἕνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς γεννηθέντα πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων, Φῶς ἐκ Φωτὸς, Θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρί· δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο· τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐκ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα· σταυρωθέντα τε ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, καὶ παθόντα καὶ ταφέντα, καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς· καὶ ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, καὶ καθεζόμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ πάλιν ἐρχόμενον μετὰ δόξης κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς· οὗ τῆς βασιλείας οὐκ ἔσται τέλος.

Καὶ εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον, τὸ κύριον (καὶ) τὸ ζωοποιὸν, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς[1] ἐκπορευόμενον, τὸ σὺν Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ συνπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον, τὸ λαλῆσαν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν· εἰς μίαν, ἁγίαν, καθολικήν, καὶ ἀποστολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν· ὁμολογοῦμεν ἓν βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν· προσδοκῶμεν ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν καὶ ζωὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος. Ἀμην.

[1] The Latin Church adds *filioque*, as if ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ.

NOTE VI. (Lecture II. p. 62)

Epiphanian Additions to the Nicene Creed

The addition found in Epiphanius to his version of the Nicene formula runs thus:—

τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας, ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν, ἢ ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο, ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας φάσκοντας εἶναι ῥευστὸν ἢ ἀλλοιωτὸν τὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ Υἱόν, τούτους ἀναθεματίζει ἡ καθολικὴ καὶ ἀποστολικὴ Ἐκκλησία.—Epiphanii *Opera*, ed. Migne, *Patrol.* vol. xliii. p. 231 *sq.*

An expanded version of the Creed found in a later work of Epiphanius concludes in a similar way, only including the Holy Spirit with the Son in its affirmations, and altering the word ῥευστόν (effluent) into τρεπτόν (variable). An anathema is also added against those who will not confess a resurrection of the dead, and all the heresies which are not of this the right faith (καὶ παλὶν ἀναθεματίζομεν τοὺς μὴ ὁμολογοῦντας ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν, καὶ πάσας τὰς αἱρέσεις τὰς μὴ ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ὀρθῆς πίστεως οὔσας).

NOTE VII. (Lecture II. p. 69)

The Athanasian Creed or the Hymn Quicunque.

Indicating the Heresies to which the several clauses refer; with passages from the works of Augustine, corresponding to different parts of the formulary.

For a more detailed reference to these passages, as well as to parallels from other early writers of the Church, see Waterland, *Critical History of the Athanasian Creed*, 1724, ch. ix., and King's valuable *Appendix* to this chapter, containing parallels from the ante-Nicene Fathers (Oxford, 1870).

1. Quicunque vult salvus esse: ante omnia opus est ut teneat catholicam fidem.

'Catholicæ disciplinæ majestate institutum est, ut accedentibus ad religionem fides persuadeatur ante omnia.'—*De Utilitate Credendi*, c. 29.

2. Quam nisi quisque integram inviolatamque servaverit: absque dubio in æternum peribit.

3. Fides autem catholica hæc est: ut unum Deum in Trinitate, et Trinitatem in Unitate veneremur;

4. Neque confundentes personas:[1] neque substantiam separantes.[2]

'Et hæc omnia nec confuse unum sunt, nec disjuncte tria sunt.'—*Epist. clxx.* § 5.

5. Alia est enim persona Patris: alia Filii:[3] alia Spiritus Sancti.[4]

6. Sed Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti una est divinitas: æqualis gloria, coæterna majestas.[5]

'Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti unam virtutem, unam substantiam, unam Deitatem, unam majestatem, unam gloriam.'—*Contr. Maxim.* lib. *ii.* c. 24, § 14.

7. Qualis Pater: talis Filius: talis (et) Spiritus Sanctus.

8. Increatus Pater: increatus Filius: increatus (et) Spiritus Sanctus.

9. Immensus Pater: immensus Filius: immensus (et) Spiritus Sanctus.

'Magnus Pater, magnus Filius, magnus Spiritus Sanctus.'—*De Trinitate*, lib. *v.* c. 8, § 9.

10. Æternus Pater: æternus Filius: æternus (et) Spiritus Sanctus.

'Æternus Pater, coæternus Filius, coæternus Spiritus Sanctus.'—*Serm. cv.* § 3.

[1] *Against Sabellians and Patripassians. So Clause* 5.
[2] *Against Arians.* [3] *Against Docetæ.*
[4] *Against Macedonians.* [5] *Against Arians. So Clauses* 7-18.

11. Et tamen non tres æterni: sed unus æternus.

12. Sicut non tres increati nec tres immensi: sed unus increatus et unus immensus.

'Non tamen tres magni, sed unus magnus.'—*De Trin. l.c.*

13. Similiter omnipotens Pater, omnipotens Filius: omnipotens (et) Spiritus Sanctus.

'Itaque omnipotens Pater, omnipotens Filius, omnipotens Spiritus sanctus.'—*Ib.*

14. Et tamen non tres omnipotentes: sed unus omnipotens.

'Nec tamen tres omnipotentes, sed unus omnipotens.'—*Ib.* (see also 19, below).

15. Ita Deus Pater, Deus Filius: Deus (et) Spiritus Sanctus.

'Deus Pater, Deus Filius, Deus Spiritus Sanctus.'—*De Trinitate*, lib. *viii.* c. 1.

16. Et tamen non tres Dii: sed unus est Deus.

'Nec tamen tres Dii . . . sed unus Deus.'—*Ib.*

17. Ita Dominus Pater, Dominus Filius: Dominus (et) Spiritus Sanctus.

'Sic et Dominum si quæras, singulum Quemque respondeo.'—*Contr. Maxim.* lib. *ii.* c. 23, § 3.

18. Et tamen non tres Domini: sed unus (est) Dominus.

'Sed simul omnes non tres Dominos Deos, sed unum Dominum Deum dico.'—*Ib.*

19. Quia sicut singillatim unamquamque personam Deum ac Dominum confiteri; Christiana veritate compellimur;

'Cum de singulis quæritur, unusquisque eorum et Deus et omnipotens esse respondeatur; cum vero de omnibus simul, non Tres Dii vel tres omnipotentes, sed unus Deus omnipotens.'—*De Civitate Dei*, lib. *xi.* c. 24.

20. Ita tres Deos, aut (tres) Dominos dicere: catholica religione prohibemur.

21. Pater a nullo est factus : nec creatus nec genitus.

'Dicimus Patrem Deum de nullo.'—*Serm. cxl.* § 2.

22. Filius a Patre solo est : non factus nec creatus sed genitus.

'Filius Patris solius . . . Hunc quippe de sua substantia genuit, non ex nihilo fecit.'—*Epist. clxx.* §§ 3, 4.

23. Spiritus Sanctus a Patre et Filio : non factus nec creatus nec genitus sed procedens.

'De Filio Spiritus Sanctus procedere reperitur . . Neque natus est sicut Unigenitus, neque factus.'—*De Trin.* lib. *xv.* c. 17, § 29 ; lib. *v.* c. 14, § 15.

24. Unus ergo Pater, non tres Patres : unus Filius, non tres Filii : unus Spiritus Sanctus, non tres Spiritus Sancti.

'Unus est Pater, non duo vel tres ; et unus Filius, non duo vel tres ; et unus amborum Spiritus, non duo vel tres.'—*Contr. Maxim.* lib. *ii.* c. 23, § 3.

25. Et in hac Trinitate nihil prius aut posterius : nihil majus aut minus.

'In hac Trinitate non est aliud alio majus, aut minus.'—*Serm. ccxiv.* § 10.

26. Sed totæ tres Personæ : coæternæ sibi sunt, et coæquales.

27. Ita, ut per omnia (sicut jam supra dictum est) et Unitas in Trinitate : et Trinitas in Unitate veneranda sit.

28. Qui vult ergo salvus esse : ita de Trinitate sentiat.

29. Sed necessarium est ad æternam salutem : ut Incarnationem quoque Domini nostri Jesu Christi fideliter credat.

'Necessaria est omnibus fides Incarnationis Christi.'—*Serm. cclxiv.* § 5.

30. Est ergo fides recta ut credamus et confiteamur : quod Dominus noster Jesus Christus Dei Filius, Deus (pariter) et Homo est.

31. Deus (est) ex substantia Patris, ante sæcula genitus : et Homo est ex substantia matris in sæculo natus.

'Deus ante omnia sæcula, Homo in nostro sæculo.'—*Enchir.* c. *xxxv.*

32. Perfectus Deus, perfectus Homo: ex anima rationali et humana carne subsistens.[1]

33. Aequalis Patri secundum divinitatem: minor Patre secundum humanitatem.

'Aequalem Patri secundum Divinitatem, minorem autem Patre secundum Carnem, hoc est, secundum hominem.'—*Epist. cxxxvii.* § 12.

34. Qui licet Deus sit et Homo: non duo tamen, sed unus est Christus.[2]

'Utrumque autem simul non duo sed unus est Christus.'—*In Johann. Tract. lxxviii.* § 3.

35. Unus autem non conversione Divinitatis in carnem: sed assumptione humanitatis in Deum.

'Verbum caro factum est, a Divinitate carne suscepta, non in carnem Divinitate mutata.'—*Enchir.* c. *xxxiv.*

36. Unus omnino, non confusione substantiæ: sed unitate Personæ.

'Idem Deus qui homo, et qui Deus idem homo, non confusione naturæ, sed unitate personæ.'—*Serm. clxxxvi.* § 1.

37. Nam sicut anima rationalis et caro unus et homo: ita Deus et Homo unus est Christus.

'Sicut enim unus est homo anima rationalis et caro; sic unus est Christus Deus et homo.'—*In Johann. l.c.*

38. Qui passus est pro nostra salute, descendit ad inferos: tertia die resurrexit a mortuis.

39. Ascendit ad [in] cœlos, sedet ad dexteram (Dei) Patris (omnipotentis): inde venturus (est) judicare vivos et mortuos.

40. Ad cujus adventum omnes homines resurgere habent

[1] *Against Apollinarians.* [2] *Against Nestorians.*

cum corporibus suis: et reddituri sunt de factis propriis rationem.

41. Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam æternam: qui vero mala, in ignem æternum.

42. Hæc est fides catholica: quam nisi quisque fideliter firmiterque crediderit, salvus esse non poterit.

NOTE VIII. (Lecture III. p. 99)

The Augsburg Confession (*Confessio Augustana*). By Philip Melanchthon, 1530. Translated by Philip Schaff, D.D., from the Latin; phrases and clauses peculiar to the German original being *bracketed.*

1. The churches, with common consent among us, do teach that the decree of the Nicene Synod concerning the unity of the Divine Essence and of the Three Persons is true, and without doubt to be believed: to wit, that there is one divine essence which is called and is God, eternal, without body, indivisible [without part], of infinite power. wisdom, goodness, the Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible; and that yet there are Three Persons of the same essence and power, who also are coeternal, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And they use the name of Person in that signification in which the Ecclesiastical writers [the Fathers] have used it in this cause, to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which properly subsists.

They condemn all heresies which have sprung up against this Article; as the Manichees, who set down two principles, Good and Evil; in the same manner the Valentinians, Arians, Eunomians, Mohammedans, and all such like. They condemn also the Samosatenes, old and new, who, when they earnestly contend that there is but one Person, do craftily and wickedly trifle, after the manner of rhetoricians,

about the Word and Holy Ghost, that they are not distinct persons, but that the Word signifieth a vocal word, and the Spirit a motion created in things.

2. Also they teach, that after Adam's Fall all men begotten after the common course of nature are born with sin; that is, without the fear of God, without trust in Him, and with fleshly appetite; and that this disease, or original fault, is truly sin, condemning and bringing eternal death now also upon all that are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit.

They condemn the Pelagians, and others, who deny this original fault to be sin indeed; and who, so as to lessen the glory of the merits and benefits of Christ, argue that a man may, by the strength of his own reason, be justified before God.

3. Also they teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, took unto Him man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably joined together in unity of persons, one Christ, true God and true Man, who was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, that He might reconcile the Father unto us, and might be a Sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men.

The same also descended into hell (inferos), and truly rose again the third day. Afterwards He ascended into the heavens, that he might sit at the right hand of the Father, and reign for ever, and have dominion over all creatures; might sanctify those that believe in Him, by sending the Holy Spirit into their hearts, who shall rule [sanctify, purify, strengthen], comfort, and quicken them, and shall defend them against the devil and the power of sin.

The same Christ shall openly come again, to judge the

quick and the dead, according as the Apostles' Creed declareth these and other things.

4. Also they teach that men cannot be justified [obtain forgiveness of sins and righteousness] before God by their own powers, merits, or works; but are justified freely [of grace] for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favour, and their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death hath satisfied for our sins. This faith doth God impute for righteousness before Him: —*Romans* iii. and iv.

5. For the obtaining of this faith the ministry of teaching the Gospels and administering the Sacraments was instituted.

For by the Word and Sacraments, as by instruments, the Holy Spirit is given; who worketh faith, where and when it pleaseth God, in those that hear the Gospel; to wit, that God, not for our merits' sake, but for Christ's sake, doth justify those who believe that they for Christ's sake are received into favour.

They condemn the Anabaptists and others, who imagine that the Holy Spirit is given to men without the outward word, through their own preparations and works.

6. Also they teach that this faith should bring forth good fruits, and that men ought to do the good works commanded of God, because it is God's will, and not on any confidence of meriting justification before God by their works.

For remission of sins and justification is apprehended by faith, as also the voice of Christ witnesseth: 'When ye have done all these things, say, We are unprofitable servants.'

The same also do the ancient writers of the Church teach, for Ambrose saith: 'This is ordained of God, that he that believeth in Christ shall be saved, without works, by faith alone, freely receiving remission of sins.'

7. Also they teach that our holy Church is to continue

for ever. But the Church is the congregation of saints [the assembly of all believers] in which the Gospel is rightly [purely] taught, and the Sacraments rightly administered [according to the Gospel].

And unto the true unity of the Church it is sufficient to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies instituted by man, should be alike everywhere; as St. Paul saith: 'There is one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.'

8. Though the Church be properly the congregation of saints and true believers, yet seeing that in this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled with it, it is lawful to use the Sacraments administered by evil men according to the voice of Christ (Mat. xxiii. 2): 'The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat,' etc. And the Sacraments and the Word are effectual, by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, though they be delivered by evil men.

They condemn the Donatists and such like, who denied that it was lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the Church, and held that the ministry of evil men is useless and without effect.

9. Of Baptism they teach that it is necessary to salvation, and that by Baptism the grace of God is offered, and that children are to be baptized, who, by Baptism, being offered to God, are received into God's favour.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who allow not the Baptism of children, and affirm that children are saved without Baptism.

10. Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the [true] Body and Blood of Christ are truly present [under the form of bread and wine] and are [there] communicated to those that eat in the Lord's Supper [and received]. And they

disapprove of those that teach otherwise [wherefore also the opposite doctrine is rejected].

11. Concerning Confession, they teach that private absolution be retained in the churches, though enumeration of all offences be not necessary in Confession. For it is impossible; according to the Psalm: 'Who can understand his errors?'

12. Touching Repentance, they teach that such as have fallen after baptism may find remission of sins at what time they are converted [whenever they come to repentance], and that the Church should give absolution unto such as return to repentance.

Now Repentance consisteth properly of these two parts: One is Contrition, or terrors stricken into the conscience through the acknowledgment of sin; the other is Faith, which is conceived by the Gospel, or absolution; and doth believe that for Christ's sake sins be forgiven, and comforteth the conscience, and freeth it from terrors. Then should follow Good Works, which are fruits of Repentance.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that men once justified can lose the Spirit of God, and contend that some men may attain to such a perfection in this life that they cannot sin. [Here are rejected those who teach that those who have once been holy cannot fall again.] The Novatians are also condemned, who would not absolve such as had fallen after baptism, though they returned to repentance. They also that do not teach that remission of sins is obtained by faith, and who command us to merit grace by satisfactions, are rejected.

13. Concerning the use of the Sacraments, they teach that they were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather that they should be signs and testimonies of the will of God towards us, set forth unto us to stir up and confirm faith in such as use them. Therefore

men must use Sacraments so as to join faith with them, which believe the promises that are offered and declared unto us by the Sacraments.

Wherefore they condemn those that teach that the Sacraments do justify by the work done, and do not teach that faith which believes the remission of sins is requisite in the use of Sacraments.

14. Concerning Ecclesiastical Order [Church Government] they teach that no man ought publicly to teach in the Church, or to administer the Sacraments, except he be rightly called [without a regular call].

15. Concerning Ecclesiastical Rites [made by men] they teach that those rites are to be observed which may be observed without sin, and are profitable for tranquillity and good order in the Church: such as are set holidays, feasts, and such like. Yet concerning such things, men are to be admonished that consciences are not to be burdened as if such service were necessary to salvation.

They are also to be admonished that human traditions, instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace, and make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of Faith. Wherefore vows and traditions concerning foods and days, and such like, instituted to merit grace and make satisfaction for sins, are useless and contrary to the Gospel.

16. Concerning Civil Affairs, they teach that such civil ordinances as are lawful are good works of God; that Christians may lawfully bear civil office, sit in judgments, determine matters by the imperial laws, and other laws in present force, appoint just punishments, engage in just war, act as soldiers, make legal bargains and contracts, hold property, take an oath at the requirement of the magistrates, marry a wife or be given in marriage. They condemn the Anabaptists, who forbid Christians these civil offices. They

condemn also those that place the perfection of the Gospel, not in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices, inasmuch as the Gospel teacheth an everlasting righteousness of the heart. In the meantime, it doth not disallow order and government of commonwealths or families (*Politiam aut Œconomiam*) but requireth especially the preservation and maintenance thereof, as of God's own ordinances, and that in such ordinances we should exercise love. Christians, therefore, must necessarily obey their magistrates and laws, save only when they command any sin; for then they must rather obey God than men (*Acts* v. 29).

17. Also they teach that, in the consummation of the world [at the Last Day] Christ shall appear to judge, and shall raise up all the dead, and shall give unto the godly and the elect eternal life and perpetual joys, but ungodly men and the devils shall He condemn into endless torments.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who think that to condemned men and the devils shall be an end of torments. They condemn others also, who now disseminate Jewish opinions, that before the resurrection of the dead the godly shall occupy the kingdom of the world, the wicked being everywhere suppressed [the saints above, the pious, shall have a worldly kingdom, and shall exterminate all the godless].

18. Concerning Free Will, they teach that man's will hath some liberty to work a civil righteousness, and to choose such things as reason can reach unto; but that it hath no power to work the righteousness of God, or a spiritual righteousness without the Spirit of God; because 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God' (1 *Cor.* ii. 14). But this is wrought in the heart when men do receive the Spirit of God

through the Word. (See St. Augustine, *Hypognosticon.* lib. iii.)

They condemn the Pelagians and others, who teach that by the powers of Nature alone, without the Spirit of God, we are able to love God above all things; also to perform the commandments of God, as touching the substance of our actions. For although Nature be able in some sort to do the external works (for it is able to withhold the hands from theft and murder), yet it cannot work the inward motions, such as the fear of God, trust in God, chastity, patience, and such like.

19. Touching the cause of sin, they teach that although God doth create and preserve Nature, yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked; to wit, of the devil and ungodly men: which will, God not aiding, turneth itself from God, as Christ saith: 'When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own' (*John* viii. 44).

20. (*This is rather a Dissertation than a mere Article of Belief. It is a lengthened vindication of the Reformers from the charge of forbidding Good Works.*) Their writings extant upon the Ten Commandments, and others of the like argument, do bear witness that they have to good purpose taught concerning every kind of life and its duties; what kinds of life, and what works in every calling, do please God. *It is further shown:—*

(1) That our works cannot reconcile God or deserve remission of sins, grace, and justification at His hands, but that these we obtain by Faith only, when we believe that we are received into favour for Christ's sake, who alone is appointed the Mediator and Propitiatory, by whom the Father is reconciled.

(2) The name of Faith doth not only signify a knowledge of the history, which may be in the wicked, and in the devil; but it signifieth a faith which believeth, not only

the history, but also the effect of the history; to wit, the article of Remission of Sins; namely, that by Christ we have grace, righteousness, and remission of sins.

(3) It is necessary to do good works, not that we may trust that we deserve grace by them, but because it is the will of God that we should do them. By faith alone is apprehended remission of sins and grace. And because the Holy Spirit is received by faith, our hearts are now renewed, and so put on new affections, so that they are able to bring forth good works.

21. Touching the Worship of Saints, they teach that the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may follow their faith and good works according to our calling; as the Emperor may follow David's example in making war to drive away the Turks from his country; for either of them is a king. But the Scripture teacheth not to invocate saints or to ask help of saints, because it propoundeth unto us one Christ the Mediator, Propitiator, High Priest, and Intercessor. This Christ is to be invocated, and He hath promised that He will hear our prayers, and approveth this worship especially, to wit, that He be invocated in all afflictions. 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with God, Jesus Christ the righteous' (1 *John* ii. 1).

22. CONCLUSION.—This is about the sum of doctrine among us [which in our Churches is preached and taught for true Christian instruction and consolation, as well as for the edification of the faithful], in which doctrine it can be seen that there is nothing which is discrepant with the Scriptures or with the Church Catholic, or even with the Roman Church, so far as that Church is known from writers [the writings of the Fathers]. (*The remainder of this Article is to show that those who protest against abuses and unauthorised traditions cannot justly be regarded as heretics.*)

Thus far the Confession deals with doctrinal matters. The Second Part recounts at considerable length the abuses which the Reformers desired to remove on the following points :—

1. Administration of the Lord's Supper in both kinds to the laity.
2. The Marriage of Priests.
3. The Celebration of the Mass.
4. Confession.
5. Traditions and ceremonial burdens.
6. Monastic Vows.
7. Ecclesiastical Authority.

In concluding the Confession, it is added : 'Those things only have been enumerated which it seemed necessary to say, that it might be understood that in doctrine and ceremonials among us there is nothing received contrary to the Scriptures or to the Catholic [Universal Christian] Church, inasmuch as it is manifest that we have diligently taken heed that no new and godless doctrines should creep [should be instilled, spread, and gain ground] within our Churches.'

The Confession is signed by the following :—

JOHN . . . Elector of Saxony.
GEORGE . . Margrave of Brandenburg.
ERNEST . . Duke of Lüneburg.
PHILIP . . . Landgrave of Hesse.
WOLFGANG . . Prince of Anhalt.
JOHN FREDERICK . Duke of Saxony.
FRANCIS . . Duke of Lüneburg.
Senate and Magistracy of Nuremberg.
Senate of Reutlingen.

NOTE IX. (Lecture III. p. 112)

The Creed of Pope Pius IV. Promulgated 1564

1. I, ——, with a firm faith believe and profess all and every one of the things contained in that Creed which the Holy Roman Church makes use of.

Here follows the Nicene Creed.

2. I most steadfastly admit and embrace apostolic and ecclesiastic traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

3. I also admit the Holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our Holy Mother Church has held and does hold, to which it belongs, to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures; neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

4. I also profess that there are truly and properly Seven Sacraments of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one, to wit, Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony; and that they confer grace; and that of these, Baptism, Confirmation, and Ordination cannot be reiterated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit the received and approved ceremonies of the Catholic Church, used in the solemn administration of the aforesaid Sacraments.

5. I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the Holy Council of Trent concerning Original Sin and Justification.

6. I profess, likewise, that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy Sacrament

of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially, the Body and Blood together with the Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a change of the whole essence of the bread into the Body, and of the whole essence of the wine into the Blood; which change the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation.

7. I also confess that under either kind alone Christ is received whole and entire, and a true Sacrament.

8. I firmly hold that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful. Likewise, that the saints reigning with Christ are to be honoured and invoked, and that they offer up prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.

9. I most firmly assert that the Images of Christ and of the perpetual Virgin the Mother of God, and also of other Saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given them. I also affirm that the power of Indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

10. I acknowledge the Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church for the Mother and Mistress of all Churches, and I promise and swear true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ.

11. I likewise undoubtingly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the Sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent; and I condemn, reject, and anathematise all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected, and anathematised.

12. I do, at this present, freely profess and truly hold this true Catholic Faith, without which no one can be saved;

and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolate, with God's assistance, to the end of my life. And I will take care, as far as in me lies, that it shall be held, taught, and preached by my subjects, or by those the care of whom shall appertain to me in my office. This I promise, vow, and swear—so help me God, and these Holy Gospels of God.

NOTE X. (Lecture IV. p. 129)

Articles of the Reformed Church of England, 1552-1571

Clauses and expressions found in the earlier (Cranmer's) Articles, but omitted in the later (Parker's), are designated by *italics;* those peculiar to the later, by *square brackets* [ ].

In many cases the same Latin original is translated differently in the two documents. The more important of these cases are indicated by *asterisks*. In some instances, at least, the alteration of the English in the later Articles is evidently deliberate.

Where the numbering of the two sets of Articles differs, the earlier number (Cranmer's) is denoted by *parentheses* ( ).

OF FAITH IN THE HOLY TRINITY

I. There is but one living and true God, *and He is* everlasting, without body, parts, or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

OF THE WORD OR SON OF GOD, WHICH WAS MADE VERY MAN

II. The Son, which is the Word of the Father [begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father], took man's nature in the

womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile His Father to us and to be a sacrifice *for all sin of man, both original and actual* [not only for original guilt, but for all actual sins of men].

Of the going down of Christ into Hell

III. As Christ died *and was buried for us* [for us and was buried], so also it is to be believed that He went down into Hell. *For the body lay in the Sepulchre until the Resurrection; but His ghost departing from Him, was with the ghosts that were in prison, or in Hell, and did preach to the same, as the place of St. Peter doth testify.*

Of the Resurrection of Christ

IV. Christ did truly arise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man's nature, wherewith He ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until He return to judge [all] men at the last day.

Of the Holy Ghost

V. [The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.]

Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

(V.) VI. Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proved thereby, *although it be sometime received of*

the faithful, as godly, and profitable for an order and comeliness [is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation], *yet no man ought to be constrained to believe it as an article of faith, or repute it requisite to the necessity of salvation.* In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

[Here follow lists of the Canonical and Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament, and a reference to the Books of the New, 'as they are commonly received.']

Of the Old Testament

(VI.) VII. The Old Testament is not *to be put away as though it were* contrary to the New, *but to be kept still;* for both in the Old and New *Testaments* [Testament] everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises [Although the Law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, do not bind Christian men; nor the civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth, yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called moral.] (See XIX., 1552, p. 303.)

Of the Three Creeds

(VII.) VIII. The Three Creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received [and believed], for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.

Of Original or Birth Sin

(VIII.) IX. Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), *which also the Anabaptists do nowadays renew*, but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from *his former* [original] righteousness, *which he had at his creation*, and is of his own nature *given* [inclined] to evil, so that the flesh desireth [lusteth] always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are *baptized*[1] [regenerated], whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek φρόνημα σαρκός, which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh, is not subject to the Law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.

Of Free Will

(IX.) X. [The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore] we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working *in* [with] us when we have that good will.

Of Grace

(X.) *The grace of Christ, or the Holy Ghost by Him given, doth take away the stony heart, and giveth an heart*

[1] In the Latin originals the word is the same, *renatis*.

of flesh. And although those that have no will to good things, He maketh them to will, and those that would evil things He maketh them not to will the same; yet nevertheless He enforceth not the will. And therefore no man when he sinneth can excuse himself as not worthy to be blamed or condemned, by alleging that he sinned unwillingly or by compulsion.

Of the Justification of Man

(XI.) *Justification by only faith in Jesus Christ in that sense, as it is declared in the Homily of Justification, is a most certain and wholesome doctrine for Christian men.*

XI. [We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.]

Of Good Works

XII. [Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, in so much that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discovered by the fruit.]

Of Works before Justification

(XII.) XIII. Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of His Spirit are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesu Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace or (as the School-authors say) deserve grace of congruity, *but because* [yea rather for that] they are not done as God hath willed and commanded

them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

Of Works of Supererogation

(XIII.) XIV. Voluntary Works besides, over and above God's Commandments, which they call Works of Supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and *iniquity* [impiety]. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for His sake than of bounden duty is required. Whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

Of Christ alone without Sin

(XIV.) XV. Christ in the truth of our nature was made like unto us in all things (sin only except), from which He was clearly void, both in His flesh and in His spirit. He came to be the Lamb without spot, who by [the] sacrifice of Himself [once made] *made once for ever* should take away the sins of the world; and sin (as Saint John saith) was not in Him. But [all we] the rest, *yea*, although *we be* baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things; and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Of Sin after Baptism

(XV.) XVI. [Not] every deadly sin willingly committed after Baptism is *not* sin against the Holy Ghost and unpardonable. Wherefore, the *place for penitents* [grant of repentance] is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after Baptism. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin; and by the grace of God we may arise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned which say they can no more sin so long as they live here, or deny the place *for*

penitents [of forgiveness] to such as truly repent *and amend their lives.*

Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost

(XVI.) *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is, when a man of malice and stubbornness of mind doth rail upon the truth of God's Word manifestly perceived, and being enemy thereunto persecuteth the same. And because such be guilty of God's curse, they entangle themselves with a most grievous and heinous crime, whereupon this kind of sin is called and affirmed of the Lord, unpardonable.*

Of Predestination and Election

XVII. Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) He hath constantly decreed by His *own judgment* [counsel] secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen [in Christ] out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. *Whereupon* [wherefore] *such as have* [they which be endued with] so excellent a benefit of God *given unto them* be called according to God's purpose by His Spirit working in due season, they through grace obey the calling; they be justified freely; they be made sons [of God] by adoption; they be made like the image of *His* [God's] only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works, and at length by God's mercy they attain to everlasting felicity.

As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because

it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God. So, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil *may* [doth] thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.

Furthermore, *although the decrees of predestination are unknown unto us, yet* we must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture; and in our doings, that will of God is to be followed which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God.

Of obtaining Eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ

XVIII. They also are to be had accursed and abhorred that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law and the light of Nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved.

All Men are bound to keep the Moral Commandments of the Law

(XIX.) *The law which was given of God by Moses, although it bind not Christian men, as concerning the ceremonies and rites of the same; neither is it required that the civil precepts and orders of it should of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet no man (be he never so perfect a Christian) is exempt and loose from the obedience of those commandments which are called moral; wherefore they are not to be hearkened unto who affirm that Holy Scripture is*

given only to the weak, and do boast themselves continually of the Spirit of whom (they say) they have learned such things as they teach, although the same be most evidently repugnant to the Holy Scripture.

Of the Church

(XX.) XIX. The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered, according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

As the Church of Jerusalem, *of* Alexandria, and *of* Antioch *hath* [have] erred, so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living [and manner of ceremonies] but also in matters of *their* Faith.

Of the Authority of the Church

(XXI.) XX. [The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: And yet] it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of Salvation.

Of the Authority of General Councils

(XXII.) XXI. General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they be gathered [together] (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God) they may err, and sometimes have erred, *not only in worldly matters, but also* [even] in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore, things ordained

by them as necessary to salvation, have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture.

Of Purgatory

(XXIII.) XXII. *The doctrine of School-authors* [the Romish doctrine] concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration as well of Images as of Relics, and also Invocation of Saints, is a fond thing, vainly *feigned* [invented] and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.

Of Ministering in the Congregation

(XXIV.) XXIII. It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the Congregation to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People Understandeth

(XXV.) *It is most seemly, and most agreeable to the Word of God, that in the Congregation nothing be openly read or spoken in a tongue unknown to the people; the which thing Paul did forbid, except some were present that should declare the same.*

XXIV. [It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have public Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understanded of the people.]

Of the Sacraments

(XXVI.) XXV. *Our Lord Jesus Christ hath knit together a company of new people with Sacraments, most few in*

number, most easy to be kept, most excellent in signification, as is Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

[Sacraments ordained [of Christ] *by the Word of God* be not only badges and tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him.

[There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

[Those five, commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.]

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon or to be carried about, but that we should *rightly* [duly] use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect *and* [or] operation ; *and yet not that of the work wrought*,[1] *as some men speak ; which word, as it is strange, and unknown to Holy Scripture, so it engendereth no godly but a very superstitious sense.* But they that receive [them] *the Sacraments* unworthily purchase to themselves damnation, as St. Paul saith.

OF THE UNWORTHINESS OF THE MINISTERS, WHICH HINDERS NOT THE EFFECT OF THE SACRAMENT

(XXVII.) XXVI. Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometime the evil

[1] *Ex opere operato.*

have chief authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name but in Christ's, and do minister by His commission and authority, we may use their Ministry both in hearing the Word of God and in the receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of *God's Ordinances* [Christ's ordinance] taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men. Nevertheless, it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church that inquiry be made of *such* [evil Ministers], and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally, being found guilty by just judgment, be deposed.

Of Baptism

(XXVIII.) XXVII. Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened; but is also a sign *and seal* of *our* [Regeneration or] new Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted *in* [into] the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and [of] our adoption to be the sons of God [by the Holy Ghost] are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed; and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The *custom of the Church to christen* [Baptism of] young Children is *to be commended, and* in any wise to be retained in the Church [as most agreeable with the institutions of Christ.]

Of the Lord's Supper

(XXIX.) XXVIII. The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a Sacrament of

our redemption by Christ's death. Insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the Bread which we break is a *communion* [partaking] of the Body of Christ, [and] likewise the Cup of Blessing is a *communion* [partaking] of the Blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) *into the substance of Christ's body and blood* [in the Supper of the Lord] cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture [overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament], and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

Forasmuch as the truth of man's nature requireth that the body of one and the selfsame man cannot be at one time in diverse places, but must needs be in some one certain place: Therefore the body of Christ cannot be present at one time in many and diverse places. And because (as Holy Scripture doth teach) Christ was taken up into heaven, and there shall continue unto the end of the world, a faithful man ought not either to believe or openly to confess the real and bodily presence (as they term it) of Christ's flesh and blood in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

[The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith.]

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not *commanded* by Christ's ordinance *to be kept* [reserved], carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

Of the Wicked which eat not the Body of Christ in the Use of the Lord's Supper

XXIX. [The Wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as Saint Augustine saith) the Sacrament of the Body

and Blood of Christ; yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ, but rather, to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing.]

Of both Kinds

XXX. [The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-people. For both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike.]

Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross

(XXX.) XXXI. The offering of Christ once made *for ever* is the perfect redemption [propitiation], *the pacifying of God's displeasure*, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or *sin* [guilt] were *forged* [blasphemous] fables, and dangerous deceits.

Of the Marriage of Priests

(XXXI.) XXXII. Bishops, Priests, and Deacons are not commanded [by God's Law either] to vow the estate of single life *without marriage, neither by God's law are they compelled* [or] to abstain from *matrimony* [marriage.] [Therefore it is lawful also for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness.]

Of excommunicate Persons, how they are to be avoided

(XXXII.) XXXIII. That person, which by open denunciation of the Church, is rightly cut off from the unity of the

Church, and excommunicated, ought to be taken of the whole multitude of the faithful as an Heathen and Publican, until he be openly reconciled by penance, and received into the Church by a Judge that hath authority thereunto.

Of the Traditions of the Church

(XXXIII.) XXXIV. It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been diverse, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, [times], and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like) as *one* [he] that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren.

[Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying.]

Of Homilies

(XXXIV.) XXXV. *The Homilies of late given, and set out by the King's authority, be godly and wholesome, containing doctrine to be received of all men; and therefore are to be read to the people diligently, distinctly, and plainly.*

[The Second Book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this Article, doth contain a godly and wholesome Doctrine, and necessary for these times, as doth the former Book of Homilies, which were set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth; and therefore we judge them to

be read in Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understanded by the people.]

[Here follow the titles of the twenty-one Homilies.]

Of the Book of Prayers, and Ceremonies of the Church of England

(XXXV.) *The Book which of very late time was given to the Church of England by the King's authority, and the Parliament, containing the manner and form of praying, and ministering the Sacraments in the Church of England, likewise also the Book of Ordering Ministers of the Church, set forth by the foresaid authority, are godly and in no point repugnant to the wholesome doctrine of the Gospel, but agreeable thereunto, furthering and beautifying the same not a little; and therefore of all faithful members of the Church of England, and chiefly of the ministers of the Word, they ought to be received and allowed with all readiness of mind and thanksgiving, and to be commended to the people of God.*

Of Consecration of Bishops and Ministers

XXXVI. [The Book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, lately set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth, and confirmed at the same time by authority of Parliament, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither hath it anything that of itself is superstitious or ungodly. And therefore, whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to the rites of that Book, since the second year of the aforenamed King Edward, unto this time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same Rites; we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.]

Of the Civil Magistrates

(XXXVI.) XXXVII. *The King of England is Supreme Head in earth, next under Christ, of the Church of England and Ireland.*

[The Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England and other her dominions; unto whom the chief government of all estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

[When we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the chief government, by which Titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended; we give not to our Princes the ministering either of God's Word or of the Sacraments, the which things the Injunctions also set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in Holy Scriptures by God Himself; that is, that they shall rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers.]

The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.

The *Civil Laws* [Laws of the Realm] may punish Christian men with death, for heinous and grievous offences.

It is lawful for Christian men at the commandment of the Magistrate to wear weapons, and *to* serve in [the] *lawful* wars.

Of Christian Men's Goods, which are not Common

(XXXVII.) XXXVIII. The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as certain Anabaptists do falsely

boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such thing as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

Of a Christian Man's Oath

(XXXVIII.) XXXIX. As we confess that vain and rash Swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James His Apostle; so we judge that Christian religion doth not prohibit but that a man may swear when the Magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

The Resurrection of the Dead is not yet brought to pass

(XXXIX.) *The Resurrection of the dead is not as yet brought to pass, as though it only belonged to the soul, which by the grace of Christ is raised from the death of sin, but it is to be looked for at the last day; for then (as Scripture doth most manifestly testify) to all that be dead their own bodies, flesh, and bone, shall be restored, that the whole man may, according to his works, have either reward or punishment, as he hath lived virtuously or wickedly.*

The Souls of them that depart this Life do neither die with the Body nor remain idle

(XL.) *They which say that the souls of such as depart hence do sleep, being without all sense, feeling, or perceiving, until the day of judgment, or affirm that the souls die with the bodies, and at the last day shall be raised up with the same, do utterly dissent from the right belief declared to us in Holy Scripture.*

Heretics called Millenarii

(XLI.) *They that go about to renew the fable of heretics called Millenarii, be repugnant to Holy Scripture and cast themselves headlong into a Jewish dotage.*

ALL MEN SHALL NOT BE SAVED AT THE LENGTH

(XLII.) *They also are worthy of condemnation who endeavour at this time to restore the dangerous opinion that all men, be they never so ungodly, shall at length be saved, when they have suffered pains for their sins a certain time appointed by God's justice.*

NOTE XI. (Lecture IV. p. 131)

The Lambeth Articles of 1595. Original Latin text, from Strype's *Life of Whitgift.*

1. Deus ab æterno prædestinavit quosdam ad vitam, et quosdam ad mortem reprobavit.

2. Causa movens aut efficiens prædestinationis ad vitam non est prævisio fidei, aut perseverantiæ, aut bonorum operum, aut ullius rei quæ insit in personis prædestinatis, sed sola voluntas beneplaciti Dei.

3. Prædestinatorum præfinitus et certus numerus est, qui nec augeri nec minui potest.

4. Qui non sunt prædestinati ad salutem necessario propter peccata sua damnabuntur.

5. Vera, viva, et justificans fides, et Spiritus Dei sanctificans non extinguitur, non excidit, non evanescit in electis, aut finaliter aut totaliter.

6. Homo vere fidelis, id est, fide justificante præditus, certus est plerophoria fidei, de remissione peccatorum suorum, et salute sempiterna sua per Christum.

7. Gratia salutaris non tribuitur, non communicatur, non conceditur, universis hominibus, qua servari possint, si voluerint.

8. Nemo potest venire ad Christum, nisi datum ei fuerit, et nisi Pater eum traxerit. Et omnes homines non trahuntur a Patre, ut veniant ad Filium.

9. Non est positum in arbitrio aut potestate uniuscujusque hominis servari.

NOTE XII. (Lecture IV. p. 141)

Articles of the Dutch Remonstrants (or Arminians), 1615

The Decrees of the Synod of Dort cannot be fully understood without an exact knowledge of the Articles which called them forth, and to which they are a reply. They are here given from the original Dutch, and form a succinct statement of the distinctively Arminian Theology.

1. That God, by an eternal, unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ His Son, before the foundation of the world, hath determined, out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ's sake, and through Christ, those who, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, shall believe on this His Son Jesus, and shall persevere in this faith and obedience of faith through this grace, even to the end; and, on the other hand, to leave the incorrigible and unbelieving in sin and under wrath, and to condemn them as alienate from Christ, according to the word of the Gospel n *John* iii. 36, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him'; and according to other passages of Scripture also.

2. That, agreeably thereto, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, died for all men and for every man, so that He has obtained for them all, by His death on the Cross, redemption and the forgiveness of sins; yet that no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer, according to the word of the Gospel of *John* iii. 16, 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' And in the *First Epistle of John* ii. 2,

'And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'

3. That man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do anything that is truly good (such as saving Faith eminently is); but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through His Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the word of Christ, *John* xv. 5, 'Without Me ye can do nothing.'

4. That this grace of God is the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment of all good, even to this extent, that the regenerate man himself, without prevenient or assisting, awakening, following, and co-operative grace, can neither think, will, nor do good, nor withstand any temptations to evil; so that all good deeds or movements that can be conceived must be ascribed to the grace of God in Christ. But as respects the mode of the operation of this grace, it is not irresistible, inasmuch as it is written concerning many that they have resisted the Holy Ghost (*Acts* vii. and elsewhere in many places).

5. That those who are incorporated into Christ by a true faith, and have thereby become partakers of His life-giving Spirit, have thereby full power to strive against Satan, sin, the world, and their own flesh, and to win the victory; it being well understood that it is ever through the assisting grace of the Holy Ghost; and that Jesus Christ assists them through His Spirit in all temptations, extends to them His hand, and if only they are ready for the conflict, and desire His help, and are not inactive, keeps them from falling, so that they, by no craft or power of Satan, can be misled nor plucked out of Christ's hands,

according to the word of Christ, *John* x. 28, 'Neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.' But, whether they are capable, through negligence, of forsaking again the first beginnings of their life in Christ,[1] of again returning to this present evil world, of turning away from the holy doctrine which was delivered them, of losing a good conscience, of becoming devoid of grace—must be more particularly determined out of the Holy Scriptures before we ourselves can teach it with the full persuasion of our minds.

These Articles, thus set forth and taught, the Remonstrants deem agreeable to the Word of God, tending to edification, and as regards this argument, sufficient for salvation, so that it is not necessary or edifying to rise higher or to descend deeper.

NOTE XIII. (Lecture V. p. 158)

Comparative Symbolics and the Harmony of Confessions

The proposal to issue a Harmony of Protestant Confessions originated at Frankfurt, at an Assembly of rulers and pastors of the Reformed Churches, in 1577. The first thought was to prepare a common Creed 'with a view to bring their studies and endeavours to bear against the accusations, partly of their adversaries, who were incessantly reproaching them with the multitude and variety of their Confessions, and partly of the Lutherans, who were at that time meditating the Formula of Concord.'[2] The project, however, for the time was dropped, to be revived by the Churches of Geneva and Zürich, the work of compilation being entrusted by them to Theodore Beza, with two

[1] *Hebrews* iii. 6, 14; 2 *Peter* i. 10; *Jude* 3; 1 *Timothy* i. 19; *Hebrews* xi. 13.

[2] Koecher, *Bibliotheca Theologiæ Symbolicæ et Catecheticæ*, 1751.

associates. The book was published at Geneva, in Latin, 1581, under the title, *Harmonia Confessionum Fidei orthodoxarum et Reformatarum Ecclesiarum, quæ in præcipuis quibusque Europæ regnis, nationibus et provinciis, sacram Evangelii Doctrinam pure profitentur.* An English translation, by some writer now unknown, was published at Cambridge, 1586 (another edition being issued in 1643), under the title, *An Harmony of the Confessions of Faith of the Christian and Reformed Churches which purely profess the holy Doctrine of the Gospel in all the chief kingdoms, nations and provinces of Europe: newly translated out of Latin into English: allowed by public authority.*

This valuable work has been made accessible to modern English readers by the edition of the Rev. Peter Hall, M.A., late Rector of Milston, Wilts, entitled, *The Harmony of Protestant Confessions, exhibiting the Faith of the Churches of Christ, reformed after the pure and holy Doctrine of the Gospel, throughout Europe. A new Edition, revised and considerably enlarged.* London, 1842.

The Confessions noted are eleven :—

1. The Augsburg Confession of 1530 (*Augustana*).
2. The Tetrapolitan Confession of 1530.
3. The Confession of Basle, 1534.
4. The First Helvetic Confession, 1536.
5. A Saxon Confession by Melanchthon, and
6. A Würtemberg Confession, 1551. These were prepared for presentation to the Council of Trent; the latter being so presented 24th January 1552.
7. A French Confession, 1559, presented to Francis II.
8. An English Confession, from Jewel's *Apology*, 1562.
9. The Second Helvetic Confession, 1566.
10. The Belgic Confession, 1566-1579.
11. The Bohemian Confession, 1573.

To these, in the English editions, the Scotch Confession of 1560 was added; and the edition by Mr. Hall subjoins the Thirty-nine Articles of the English Church, the Articles of the Church of Ireland, the Decrees of the Synod of Dort, and the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Other works valuable for reference are—*Corpus et Syntagma Confessionum Fidei*, compiled by Gaspar Laurentius (Geneva, 1612 and 1654); *Sylloge Confessionum sub Tempus Reformandæ Ecclesiæ editarum* (Oxford, 1804), republished with revision by Bishop Lloyd, 1827. Besides the Confessions mentioned above, this work contains the Tridentine Profession of Faith and the Heidelberg Catechism. In 1827 also a still larger collection was published at Elberfeld under the editorship of J. C. G. Augusti, entitled *Corpus Librorum Symbolicorum qui in Ecclesia Reformatorum auctoritatem publicam obtinuerunt.* This volume contains the Helvetic Consensus of 1675. But the most considerable collections, superseding all others, are those by Niemeyer (Leipzig, 1840), *Collectio Confessionum in Ecclesiis Reformatis publicatarum*, and E. G. A. Böckel (Leipzig, 1847) in German, *Bekenntniss-Schriften der Evangelisch-Reformirten Kirche;* the former containing thirty-one Confessions, the latter thirty-two (including the Anglican Catechism).

For the purposes of the English student, however, the *Harmony* as edited by Mr. Hall, and Dr. Benedict Winer's *Confessions of Christendom*, translated (1873) from his *Comparative Darstellung des Lehrbegriffs der verschiedenen Kirchenparteien*, will be found most serviceable. The latter includes a view of the symbolical writings of the Romish and Greek Churches, together with Socinian Confessions. It is scientifically arranged, and appears absolutely impartial.

NOTE XIV. (Lecture V. pp. 163, 173)

Inexhaustibleness of Scripture

Archbishop Trench, in his *Hulsean Lectures* (1845), thus speaks of the absence of systematic arrangement in Scripture, 'turned often into a charge against it by shallow or malignant objectors':—'This complaint of the want of method in Scripture, what is it in fact but this, that it is not dead but living? that it is no *herbarium*, no *hortus siccus*, but a garden? a wilderness, if men choose to call it so, but a wilderness of sweets, with its flowers upon their stalks—its plants freshly growing, the dew upon their leaves, the mould about their roots—with its lowly hyssops and its cedars of God. And when men say that there is want of *method* in it, they would speak more accurately if they said that there was want of *system*; for the highest method, even the method of the Spirit, may reign where system there is none. Method is divine, is inseparable from the ideas of God and of order; but system is of man, is a help to the weakness of his faculties, is the artificial arrangement by which he brings within his limited ken that which in on other way he would be able to grasp as a whole. That there should be books of systematic Theology—books with their plan and scheme thus lying on their very surface, and meeting us at once—this is most needful; but most needful also that Scripture should not be such a book. The dearest interests of us all, of wise men equally as of women and of children, demand this.

'It is not a defect in Scripture, it is not something which is to be executed and explained away, but rather a glory and a prerogative, that there reigns in it the freedom and fulness of nature and not the narrowness and strictness of art, as Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, said long ago when

speaking of the delightful exercise of the highest faculties of the soul which is thus secured: "All which gratulations of the soul in her successful pursuit of divine Truth would be utterly lost or prevented if the Holy Scripture set down all things so fully and methodically that our reading and understanding would everywhere keep pace together. Wherefore, that the mind of man may be worthily employed, and taken up with a kind of spiritual husbandry, God has not made the Scriptures like an artificial garden, wherein the walks are plain and regular, the plants sorted and set in order, the fruits ripe and the flowers blown, and all things fully exposed to our view; but rather like an uncultivated field, where indeed we have the ground and hidden things of all precious things; but nothing can be brought to any great beauty, order, fulness, or maturity without our industry, nor indeed with it, unless the dew of His grace descend upon it, without whose blessing this spiritual culture will thrive as little as the labour of the husbandman without showers of rain."'—*Mystery of Godliness*, bk. i. c. 2.

In the same spirit Robert Boyle writes: 'I consider that, as the Bible was not written for any one particular time or people, but for the whole Church militant diffused through all nations and ages, so there are many passages very useful which will not be found so these many ages; being possibly reserved by the prophetic Spirit that indited them (and whose omniscience comprises and unites in one prospect all times and all hearts) to quell some future foreseen heresy, which will not, perhaps, be born till we are dead, or resolve some yet unformed doubts, or confound some error that hath not yet a name.' And Bishop Butler: 'Nor is it at all incredible that a Book which has been so long in the possession of mankind should yet contain many truths as yet undiscovered. For, all the same phenomena, and the same faculties of investigation, from which

such great discoveries in natural knowledge have been made in the present and past age, were equally in the possession of mankind several thousand years before. And possibly it might be intended that events, as they come to pass, should open and ascertain the meaning of several parts of Scripture.'—*Analogy*, part ii. c. 3, § 21.

NOTE XV. (Lecture VI. p. 205)

The Articles of the Faith. Approved by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England, 1st May 1890.[1]

I. OF GOD

We believe in, and adore, one living and true God, Who is spirit, personal, infinite, and eternal, present in every place, the almighty Author and sovereign Lord of all; most blessed, most holy, and most free; perfect in wisdom, justice, truth and love; to us most merciful and gracious; unto Whom only we must cleave, Whom only we must worship and obey. To Him be glory for ever. Amen.

II. OF THE TRINITY

We acknowledge, with the ancient Church, the mystery of the Holy Trinity as revealed in Scripture, and believe that in the unity of the ever blessed Godhead there are three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of one substance, equal in power and glory.

III. OF CREATION

We believe that Almighty God, for His own holy and loving ends, was pleased in the beginning to create the heavens and the earth, by the Son, the Eternal Word; and, through progressive stages, to fashion and order this

[1] By permission of the Publication Committee.

world, giving life to every creature; and to make man in His own image, that he might glorify and enjoy God, occupying and subduing the earth and having dominion over the creatures, to the praise of his Maker's name.

IV. Of Providence

We believe that God the Creator upholds all things by the word of His power, preserving and providing for all His creatures, according to the laws of their being; and that He, through the presence and energy of His Spirit in nature and history, disposes and governs all events for His own high design: yet is He not in any wise the author or approver of sin, neither are the freedom and responsibility of man taken away, nor have any bounds been set to the sovereign liberty of Him Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth.

V. Of the Fall

We believe and confess that our first father, Adam, the representative head as well as common ancestor of mankind, transgressed the commandment of God through temptation of the devil, by which transgression he fell from his original state of innocence and communion with God; and so all mankind, being in him, have come under just condemnation, are subject to the penalty of death, and inherit a sinful nature, estranged from God, from which proceed all actual transgressions: and we acknowledge that out of this condition no man is able to deliver himself.

VI. Of Saving Grace

We believe and proclaim that God, Who is rich in mercy as well as of perfect justice, was moved by His great love to man to hold forth from the first a promise of redemption, which from age to age He confirmed and unfolded, and that, in the fulness of the time, He accomplished His

gracious purpose by sending His Son to be the Saviour of the world: wherefore our salvation out of sin and misery is ever to be ascribed to free and sovereign grace.

VII. Of the Lord Jesus Christ

We believe in and confess, with the ancient Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who, being the eternal Son of God, became man by taking to Himself a true body and soul, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; so that He is both God and Man, two whole perfect and distinct natures, the divine and the human, being inseparably joined together in one person, that He might be the Mediator between God and man, by Whom alone we must be saved.

VIII. Of the Work of Christ

We believe that the Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, being anointed with the Holy Spirit to proclaim and set up the Kingdom of God among men, did by His perfect life on earth through words and deeds of grace, and by His death upon the cross, declare the Father, Whose image He is; and did fully satisfy divine justice, and obtain for us forgiveness of sins, reconciliation to God, and the gift of eternal life, through His obedience on our behalf to the law and will of His Father, even unto death, wherein, bearing our sins, He offered Himself up a sacrifice without spot to God.

IX. Of the Exaltation of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ, being for our offences crucified, dead, and buried, saw no corruption, but was raised again on the third day, in Whose risen life we live anew, and have the pledge of a blessed resurrection; that in the same body in which He rose He ascended into heaven, where, as our High Priest, He maketh continual

intercession for us; and that He sitteth at the right hand of God, Head of the Church, clothed with authority and power as Lord over all.

X. Of the Gospel

We hold fast and proclaim that God, Who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, has, by His Son our Saviour, given commission to the Church to preach unto all nations the Gospel of His grace, wherein He freely offers to all men forgiveness and eternal life, calling on them to turn from sin, and to receive and rest by faith upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

XI. Of the Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, Who worketh freely as He will, without Whose quickening grace there is no salvation, and Whom the Father never withholds from any who ask for Him; and we give thanks that He has in every age moved on the hearts of men; that He spake by the prophets; that through our exalted Saviour He was sent forth in power to convict the world of sin, to enlighten the minds of men in the knowledge of Christ, and to persuade and enable them to obey the call of the Gospel; and that He abides with the Church, dwelling in every believer as the Spirit of truth, of holiness, and of comfort.

XII. Of Election and Regeneration

We humbly own and believe that God the Father, before the foundation of the world, was pleased of His sovereign grace to choose unto Himself in Christ a people, whom He gave to the Son, and to whom the Holy Spirit imparts spiritual life by a secret and wonderful operation of His power, using as His ordinary means, where years of understanding have been reached, the truths of His Word in

ways agreeable to the nature of man; so that, being born from above, they are the children of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

XIII. Of Justification by Faith

We believe that every one, who through the grace of the Holy Spirit repents and believes the Gospel, confessing and forsaking his sins, and humbly relying upon Christ alone for salvation, is freely pardoned and accepted as righteous in the sight of God, solely on the ground of Christ's perfect obedience and atoning sacrifice.

XIV. Of Sonship in Christ

We believe that those who receive Christ by faith are united to Him, so that they are partakers in His life, and receive of His fulness; and that they are adopted into the family of God, are made heirs with Christ, and have His Spirit abiding in them, the witness to their sonship, and the earnest of their inheritance.

XV. Of the Law and New Obedience

We believe and acknowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ has laid His people by His grace under new obligation to keep the perfect Law of God, and has by precept and example enlarged our knowledge of that Law, and illustrated the spirit of filial love in which the divine will is to be obeyed; and we bless God that the obedience of Christians, though in this life always imperfect, yet being the fruit of their union to Christ, is accepted for His sake and well-pleasing to God.

XVI. Of Sanctification and Perseverance

We believe that the Holy Spirit dwelling in all Christ's people purifies their hearts, enabling them to do freely and cheerfully that which the will of God requires, so that in

measure as they surrender themselves to the Spirit of Christ, and follow the guidance of His Word, they receive strength for daily service, and grow in holiness after the image of their Lord; or if, departing from God through unwatchfulness and neglect of prayer, any of them lapse into spiritual languor, or fall into grievous sins, yet by the mercy of God Who abideth faithful they are not cast off, but are chastened for their backsliding, and through repentance restored to His favour, so that they perish not.

XVII. Of the Church

We acknowledge one holy catholic Church, the innumerable company of saints of every age and nation, who, being united by the Holy Spirit to Christ their Head, are one body in Him, and have communion with their Lord and with one another: further, we receive it as the will of Christ that His Church on earth should exist as a visible and sacred brotherhood, consisting of those who profess faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him, together with their children, and organised for the confession of His name, the public worship of God, the upbuilding of the saints, and the proclamation of the Gospel; and we acknowledge, as a part, more or less pure, of this universal brotherhood, every particular Church throughout the world which professes this faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him, as Divine Lord and Saviour.

XVIII. Of Church Order and Fellowship

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole Head of His Church, has appointed its worship, teaching, discipline, and government to be administered according to His will revealed in Holy Scripture, by officers chosen for their fitness, and duly set apart to their office; and although the visible Church, even in its purest branch, may contain unworthy members, and is liable to err, yet believers ought

not lightly to separate themselves from its communion, but are to live in fellowship with their brethren: which fellowship is to be extended, as God gives opportunity, to all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

XIX. Of Holy Scripture

We believe that God, Who manifests Himself in creation and providence, and especially in the spirit of man, has been pleased to reveal His mind and will for our salvation at successive periods and in various ways; and that this Revelation has been, so far as needful, committed to writing by men inspired of the Holy Spirit, in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are therefore to be devoutly studied by all as God's written Word or message to mankind: and we reverently acknowledge the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures to be the Supreme Judge in questions of faith and duty.

XX. Of the Sacraments

We acknowledge Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the two Sacraments instituted by Christ, to be of perpetual obligation, as signs and seals of the new covenant, ratified in His precious blood; through the observance of which His Church is to confess her Lord and to be visibly distinguished from the rest of the world: Baptism with water into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost being the sacrament of admission into the visible Church, in which are set forth our union to Christ and regeneration by the Spirit, the remission of our sins, and our engagement to be the Lord's; and the Lord's Supper, the sacrament of communion with Christ and with His people, in which bread and wine are given and received in thankful remembrance of Him and of His sacrifice on the cross, and in which they who in faith receive the same do, after a

spiritual manner, partake of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, to their comfort, nourishment, and growth in grace.

XXI. Of the Second Advent

We assuredly believe that on a day known only to God, the Lord Jesus Christ will suddenly come again from heaven with power and great glory; and we look for this second appearing of our Saviour as the blessed hope of His Church, for which we ought always to wait in sober watchfulness and diligence, that we may be found ready at His coming.

XXII. Of the Resurrection

We believe that the souls of the righteous enter at death upon a state of rest and felicity at home with the Lord; that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, through the power of the Son of God; and that the bodies of all who are fallen asleep in Christ, as well as of the faithful who are alive at His coming, shall be fashioned anew and conformed to the body of His glory.

XXIII. Of the Last Judgment

We believe that God will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, before Whom all men must appear, Who shall separate the righteous from the wicked, make manifest the secrets of the heart, and render to every man according to the deeds which he hath done in the body, whether good or evil, when the wicked shall go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life.

XXIV. Of the Life Everlasting

Finally, we believe in and desire the life everlasting in which the redeemed shall receive their inheritance of glory in the kingdom of their Father, and be made fully blessed in the presence and service of God, Whom they shall see and enjoy for ever and ever. Amen.

NOTE XVI. (Lecture VI. p. 205)

Declaration of the Faith, Church Order, and Discipline of the Congregational, or Independent Dissenters. Adopted at the Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union, May 1833.[1]

The Congregational Churches in England and Wales, frequently called Independent, hold the following doctrines, as of Divine authority, and as the foundation of Christian faith and practice. They are also formed and governed according to the principles hereinafter stated.

PRELIMINARY NOTES

1. It is not designed, in the following summary, to do more than to state the leading doctrines of faith and order maintained by Congregational Churches in general.

2. It is not proposed to offer any proofs, reasons, or arguments in support of the doctrines herein stated, but simply to declare what the Denomination believes to be taught by the pen of inspiration.

3. It is not intended to present a scholastic or critical Confession of faith, but merely such a statement as any intelligent member of the body might offer, as containing its leading principles.

4. It is not intended that the following statement should be put forth with any authority, or as a standard to which assent should be required.

5. Disallowing the utility of Creeds, and Articles of religion, as a bond of union, and protesting against subscription to any human formularies as a term of communion, Congregationalists are yet willing to declare, for general

[1] By permission of the Congregational Union.

information, what is commonly believed among them, reserving to every one the most perfect liberty of conscience.

6. Upon some minor points of doctrine and practice, they, differing among themselves, allow to each other the right to form an unbiassed judgment of the Word of God.

7. They wish it to be observed, that, notwithstanding their jealousy of subscription to creeds and articles, and their disapproval of the imposition of any human standard, whether of faith or discipline, they are far more agreed in their doctrines and practices than any Church which enjoins subscription, and enforces a human standard of orthodoxy; and they believe that there is no minister and no church among them that would deny the substance of any one of the following doctrines of religion, though each might prefer to state his sentiments in his own way.

Principles of Religion

I. The Scriptures of the Old Testament, as received by the Jews, and the books of the New Testament, as received by the Primitive Christians from the Evangelists and Apostles, Congregational Churches believe to be Divinely inspired, and of supreme authority. These writings, in the languages in which they were originally composed, are to be consulted, with the aids of sound criticism, as a final appeal to all controversies; but the common version they consider to be adequate to the ordinary purposes of Christian instruction and edification.

II. They believe in One God, essentially wise, holy, just, and good; eternal, infinite, and immutable, in all natural and moral perfections; the Creator, Supporter, and Governor of all beings, and of all things.

III. They believe that God is revealed in the Scriptures, as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that to

each are attributable the same Divine properties and perfections. The doctrine of the Divine existence, as above stated, they cordially believe, without attempting fully to explain.

IV. They believe that man was created after the Divine image, sinless, and in his kind perfect.

V. They believe that the first man disobeyed the Divine command, fell from his state of innocence and purity, and involved all his posterity in the consequences of that fall.

VI. They believe that, therefore, all mankind are born in sin, and that a fatal inclination to moral evil, utterly incurable by human means, is inherent in every descendant of Adam.

VII. They believe that God having, before the foundation of the world, designed to redeem fallen man, made disclosures of His mercy, which were the grounds of faith and hope from the earliest ages.

VIII. They believe that God revealed more fully to Abraham the covenant of His grace, and, having promised that from His descendants should arise the Deliverer and Redeemer of mankind, set that patriarch and his posterity apart, as a race specially favoured and separated to His service ; a peculiar Church, formed and carefully preserved, under the Divine sanction and government until the birth of the promised Messiah.

IX. They believe that, in the fulness of the time, the Son of God was manifested in the flesh, being born of the Virgin Mary, but conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit ; and that our Lord Jesus Christ was both the Son of man and the Son of God ; partaking fully and truly of human nature though without sin—equal with the Father and 'the express image of His person.'

X. They believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, revealed, either personally in His own ministry, or by the

Holy Spirit in the ministry of His apostles, the whole mind of God, for our salvation; and that, by His obedience to the Divine law while He lived, and by His sufferings unto death, He meritoriously 'obtained eternal redemption for us'; having thereby vindicated and illustrated Divine justice, 'magnified the law,' and 'brought in everlasting righteousness.'

XI. They believe that, after His death and resurrection, He ascended up into heaven, where, as the Mediator, He 'ever liveth' to rule over all, and to 'make intercession for them that come unto God by Him.'

XII. They believe that the Holy Spirit is given in consequence of Christ's mediation, to quicken and renew the hearts of men; and that His influence is indispensably necessary to bring a sinner to true repentance, to produce saving faith, to regenerate the heart, and to perfect our sanctification.

XIII. They believe that we are justified through faith in Christ, as 'the Lord our righteousness'; and not 'by the works of the law.'

XIV. They believe that all who will be saved were the objects of God's eternal and electing love, and were given by an act of Divine sovereignty to the Son of God; which in no way interferes with the system of means, nor with the grounds of human responsibility; being wholly unrevealed as to its objects, and not a rule of human duty.

XV. They believe that the Scriptures teach the final perseverance of all true believers to a state of eternal blessedness, which they are appointed to obtain through constant faith in Christ, and uniform obedience to His commands.

XVI. They believe that a holy life will be the necessary effect of a true faith, and that good works are the certain fruits of a vital union to Christ.

XVII. They believe that the sanctification of true Christians, or their growth in the graces of the Spirit, and meetness for heaven, is gradually carried on through the whole period during which it pleases God to continue them in the present life, and that, at death, their souls, perfectly freed from all remains of evil, are immediately received into the presence of Christ.

XVIII. They believe in the perpetual obligation of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the former to be administered to all converts to Christianity and their children, by the application of water to the subject, 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'; and the latter to be celebrated by Christian churches as a token of faith in the Saviour, and of brotherly love.

XIX. They believe that Christ will finally come to judge the whole human race according to their works; that the bodies of the dead will be raised again; and that, as the Supreme Judge, He will divide the righteous from the wicked, will receive the righteous into 'life everlasting,' but send away the wicked into 'everlasting punishment.'

XX. They believe that Jesus Christ directed His followers to live together in Christian fellowship, and to maintain the communion of saints; and that, for this purpose, they are jointly to observe all Divine ordinances, and maintain that church order and discipline which is either expressly enjoined by inspired institution, or sanctioned by the undoubted example of the apostles and of apostolic churches.

NOTE XVII. (Lecture VI. p. 224)

Ethics of Subscription

Professor Henry Sidgwick, in his *Practical Ethics* (1898), with much frankness discusses the case of those who, to a greater or less degree, have been led to dissent from the

standards of their Church, while remaining in its membership. He concludes that, with regard to worshippers generally, 'it would be inexpedient to lay down a definite general rule. The mere presence at a religious service—by a clear common understanding—does not imply more than a general sympathy with its drift and aims; it does not necessarily imply a belief in any particular statement made in the course of it; as an ordinary member of the congregation is not obliged to join in any such statement unless he likes.' Again: 'The minds of some are so constituted that it would be a mockery to them to take part in a service not framed in exact accordance with their theological convictions; to others, again, quite as genuinely religious, but more influenced by sympathies and associations, the element of intellectual agreement appears less important.'

The case of the *teacher*, the officiating minister, is different. Having declared his personal belief in the propositions of the Creed, and pledged himself to maintain them, he is bound by the obligations of veracity and good faith to cease from affirming that in which he has ceased to believe. At the same time, 'the utmost breadth of interpretation should be granted, the utmost variety of meanings allowed, which the usage of language, especially the vagueness of many fundamental notions, will fairly admit.'

Some, however, go much beyond this general position. 'I believe,' says Professor Sidgwick, 'that there are men who make these false statements' (of concurrence in the articles of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds) 'regularly, with the best intentions, and with aims and purposes with which we should all here[1] sympathise'; yet adding 'that no

[1] At a meeting of the West London Ethical Society, 24th November 1895.

gain in enlightenment and intelligence which the Anglican ministry may receive from the presence of such men can compensate for the damage done to moral habits, and the offence given to moral sentiments by their example.'

To the principle thus broadly and lucidly enunciated, a clerical critic of the Professor takes exception, maintaining that there is a clear distinction between a general assent and an explicit belief in particulars. There is a well-understood agreement that 'Subscription does not imply a literal acceptance of the formulæ.' If the question be raised how far the principle of 'liberalising interpretation' may be carried, the permissible limits of deviation may be defined by public opinion, by recognised usage, by 'a general understanding,' or else by the authority—practically the dispensing power—of the bishop. Nor are we left in any doubt as to the kind of doctrines thus presumably held as open questions. The chief instance selected is the birth of Christ from a virgin; which a clergyman, it is held by Professor Sidgwick's critic, may honestly affirm, in the language of the Creed, while really believing that Christ had two human parents—provided he thinks the matter 'of no spiritual significance.'

It is unnecessary to follow the Professor into his criticism of these views. The whole discussion raises the question whether the requirement itself of Subscription, necessitating so much casuistry, is not itself a mistake—or, shall we say, out of date?

NOTE XVIII. (Lecture VII. p. 265)

Discussion on the Catholicity of Orthodox Nonconformists

The late Dean Alford wrote in 1868:—

'It was once the lot of the present writer to introduce into a large clerical society, meeting monthly for discussion,

the question, whether an orthodox Dissenter (using, of course, the term *orthodox* in its well-understood sense, as applied to Christian doctrine) is to be regarded as a member of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. It seemed to him very necessary that his fellow-members should be "brought to book" respecting this matter. Some of them were very high Churchmen, and were in the habit of speaking on it as the clergy of that school usually do—viz. of designating as "outside the Church" all their Nonconformist countrymen, and all non-Episcopal, and some of the Episcopal, foreign religious bodies. At the same time, it was a patent fact that the families of some of these very men were Dissenters, and equally patent that when any members of those families were spoken of by them, it was always as Christians, as living a Christian life, and dying in Christian hope.

'Here then was an inconsistency which obviously wanted clearing up—which could only be cleared up, as it seemed to the proposer of the question, in one way, viz. by the abandonment of the high exclusive view in theory, as it was already abandoned in practice. The debate lasted far into the evening, and was adjourned to a second monthly meeting. At that meeting it was at last carried unanimously in the affirmative, that the Dissenter, holding the articles of the Christian faith, is to be regarded as a member of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. And I may mention that among those affirmative votes was that of one who very shortly afterwards left us for the Church of Rome. *Magna erat veritas, et prævalebat.* When men came once to look this question in the face, and to bring it to the test of their own consciences—of their verdict over the holy lives and hopeful deaths of their friends and neighbours—the artificial barriers fell, and the righteous nation which keepeth the truth entered in. The only true test triumphed—that propounded

by our Master: By their *fruits* (not by their hierarchies) shall ye know them.

'This' (Dean Alford expressively adds) 'was seventeen years ago. How such a debate might *now* terminate is perhaps doubtful. But any other decision than that at which we arrived is, I submit, impossible to the fair-judging Christian mind. If the term "Christendom" is to be interpreted by facts, and not by a theory prior to facts, it must include those bodies of professing Christians at home whom we call Nonconformists: it must also include those foreign Churches whose form of government differs from our own.'[1]

[1] *Contemporary Review*, February 1868; reprinted in Dean Alford's *Essays and Addresses*, 1869, pp. 85-87.

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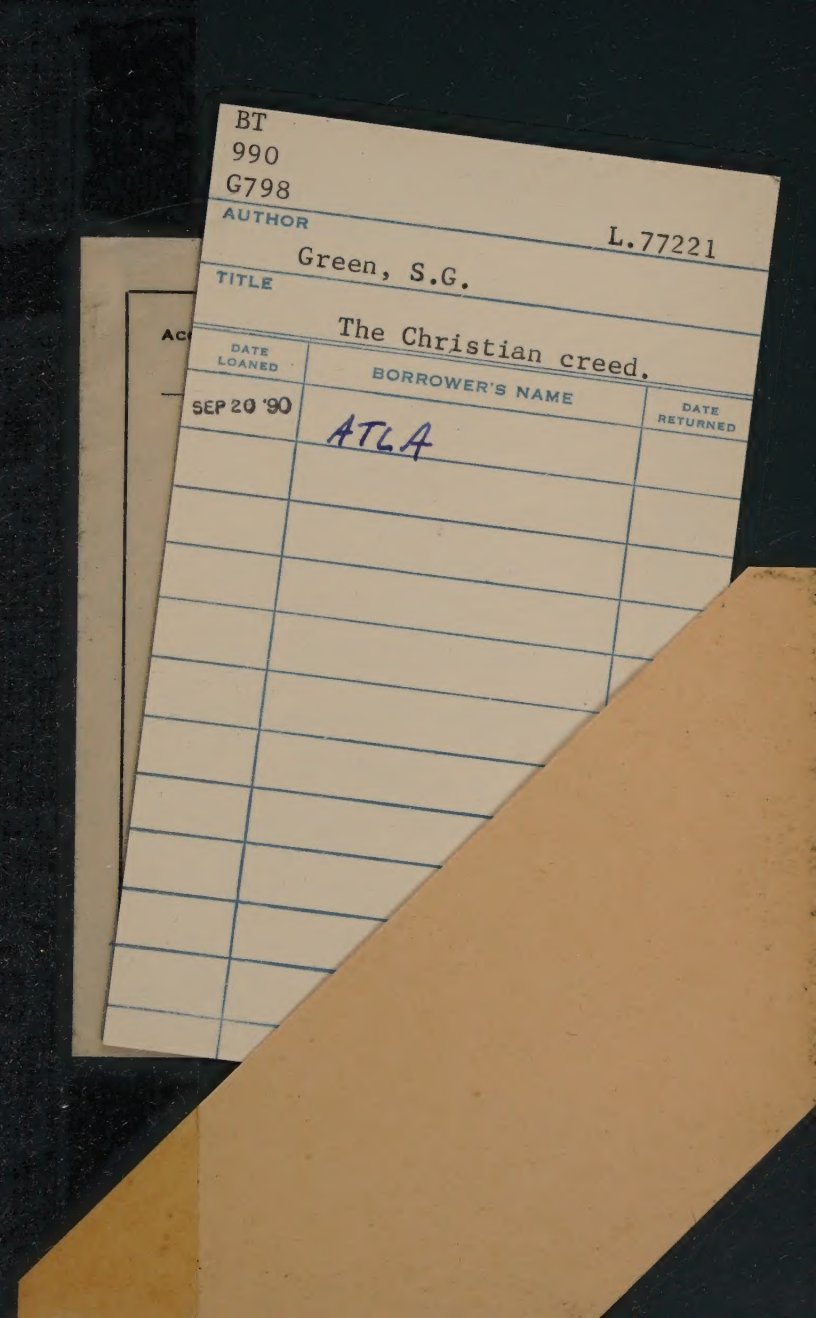
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